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*William Aust*

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THE  
ODYSSEY OF HOMER.

TRANSLATED INTO  
ENGLISH BLANK VERSE.  
BY WILLIAM COWPER,  
OF THE INNER TEMPLE, ESQ.

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VOL. II.



# CONTENTS.

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## VOL. XIV.

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### THE ODYSSEY.

|  | Page |
|--|------|
| Book XIII. . . . .                     | 1    |
| XIV. . . . .                           | 3    |
| XV. . . . .                            | 8    |
| XVI. . . . .                           | 71   |
| XVII. . . . .                          | 97   |
| XVIII. . . . .                         | 125  |
| XIX. . . . .                           | 147  |
| XX. . . . .                            | 177  |
| XXI. . . . .                           | 197  |
| XXII. . . . .                          | 219  |
| XXIII. . . . .                         | 245  |
| XXIV. . . . .                          | 261  |
| .                                      |      |
| BATTLE OF THE FROGS AND MICE . . . . . | 285  |

# THE ODYSSEY.



## BOOK XIII.

## ARGUMENT OF THE THIRTEENTH BOOK.

Ulysses having finished his narrative, and received additional presents from the Phæacians, embarks: he is conveyed in his sleep to Ithaca, and in his sleep is landed on that island. The ship that carried him is in her return transformed by Neptune to a rock.

Minerva meets him on the shore, enables him to recollect his country, which, till enlightened by her, he believed to be a country strange to him, and they concert together the means of destroying the suitors. The Goddess then repairs to Sparta to call thence Telemachus, and Ulysses, by her aid disguised like a beggar, proceeds toward the cottage of Eumæus.

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HE ceased; the whole assembly silent sat,  
Harm'd into ecstacy with his discourse  
Throughout the twilight hall. Then, thus the King.

Ulysses, since beneath my brazen dome  
Ublime thou hast arrived, like woes, I trust,                   5  
Thou shalt not in thy voyage hence sustain  
By tempests tost, though much to woe inured.  
To you, who daily in my palace quaff  
Our princely meed of generous wine and hear  
The sacred bard, my pleasure thus I speak,                   10  
The robes, wrought gold, and all the other gifts  
Of this our guest, by the Phæacian Chiefs  
Brought hither in the sumptuous coffer lie.  
But come—present ye to the stranger, each,  
An ample tripod also, with a vase                   15  
Of smaller size, for which we will be paid  
By public impost; for the charge of all  
Excessive were by one alone defray'd.

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Your princely meed of generous wine and hear  
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But come—present ye to the stranger, each.  
An ample tripod also, with a vase 15  
Of smaller size, for which we will be paid  
By public impost; for the charge of all  
Excessive were by one alone defray'd.

So spake Alcinoüs, and his counsel pleased ;  
 Then, all retiring, sought repose at home. 20  
 But when Aurora, daughter of the dawn,  
 Look'd rosy forth, each hasted to the bark  
 With his illustrious present, which the might  
 Of King Alcinoüs, who himself her sides  
 Ascended, safe beneath the seats bestowed, 25  
 Lest it should harm or hinder, while he toil'd  
 In rowing, some Phæacian of the crew.  
 The palace of Alcinoüs seeking next,  
 Together, they prepared a new regale.  
 For them, in sacrifice, the <sup>1</sup>sacred might 30  
 Of King Alcinoüs slew an ox to Jove  
 Saturnian, cloud-girt governor of all.  
 The thighs with fire prepared, all glad partook  
 The noble feast ; meantime, the bard divine  
 Sang, sweet Demodocus, the people's joy. 35  
 But oft Ulysses to the radiant sun  
 Turn'd wistful eyes, anxious for his decline,  
 Nor longer, now, patient of dull delay.  
 As when some hungry swain whose sable bees  
 Have through the fallow dragg'd his ponderous plough  
 All day, the setting sun views with delight 41  
 For supper' sake, which with tired feet he seeks,  
 So welcome to Ulysses' eyes appear'd  
 The sun-set of that eve ; directing, then,  
 His speech to maritime Phæacia's sons, 45  
 But to Alcinoüs chiefly, thus he said.

<sup>1</sup> Ἱερον μενος Αλκινόοιο.

Alcinous, o'er Phæacia's realm supreme !  
Libation made, dismiss ye me in peace,  
And farewell all ! for what I wish'd, I have,  
Conductors hence, and honourable gifts 50  
With which heaven prosper me ! and may the Gods  
Vouchsafe to me, at my return, to find  
All safe, my spotless consort and my friends !  
May ye, whom here I leave, gladden your wives  
And see your children blest, and may the Powers 55  
Immortal with all good enrich you all,  
And from calamity preserve the land !

He ended ; they unanimous, his speech  
Applauded loud, and bade dismiss the guest  
Who had so wisely spoken and so well. 60  
Then thus Alcinous to his herald spake.

Pontonous ! charging high the beaker, bear  
To every guest beneath our roof the wine,  
That, prayer preferr'd to the eternal Sire,  
We may dismiss our inmate to his home. 65

Then bore Pontonous to every guest  
The brimming cup ; they, where they sat, perform'd  
Libation due ; but the illustrious Chief  
Ulysses, from his seat arising, placed  
A massy goblet in Arete's hand, 70  
To whom in accents wing'd, grateful, he said.

Farewell, O Queen, a long farewell, till age  
Arrive, and death, the appointed lot of all !  
I go ; but be this people, and the King  
Alcinous, and thy progeny, thy joy 75  
Yet many a year beneath this glorious roof !



So saying, the Hero through the palace-gate  
 Issued, whom, by Alcinoüs' command,  
 The royal herald to his vessel led.  
 Three maidens also of Areta's train 80.  
 His steps attended; one, the robe well-bleach'd  
 And tunic bore; the corded coffer, one;  
 And food the third, with wine of crimson hue.  
 Arriving where the galley rode, each gave  
 Her charge to some brave mariner on board, 85  
 And all was safely stow'd. Meantime were spread  
 Linen and arras on the deck astern,  
 For his secure repose. And now the Chief  
 Himself embarking, silent lay'd him down.  
 Then every rower to his bench repair'd: 90  
 They drew the loosen'd cable from its hold  
 In the drill'd rock, and resupine, at once  
 With lusty strokes upturn'd the flashing waves.  
*His* eye-lids soon sleep, falling as a dew,  
 Closed fast, death's simular, in sight the same. 95  
 She, as four harness'd stallions o'er the plain  
 Shooting together at the scourge's stroke,  
 Toss high their manes, and rapid scour along,  
 So mounted she the waves, while dark the flood  
 Roll'd after her of the resounding Deep. 100  
 Steady she ran and safe, passing in speed  
 The falcon, swiftest of the fowls of heaven;  
 With such rapidity she cut the waves,  
 An Hero bearing like the Gods above  
 In wisdom, one familiar long with woe 105  
 In fight sustain'd, and on the perilous flood,

Though sleeping now serenely, and resign'd  
To sweet oblivion of all sorrow past.  
The brightest star of heaven, precursor chief  
Of day-spring, now arose, when at the isle 110  
(Her voyage soon perform'd) the bark arrived.

There is a port sacred in Ithaca  
To Phorceys, hoary antient of the Deep,  
Form'd by converging shores, prominent both  
And both abrupt, which from the spacious bay 115  
Exclude all boisterous winds ; within it, ships  
(The port once gain'd) uncabled ride secure.  
An olive, at the haven's head, expands  
Her branches wide, near to a pleasant cave  
Umbrageous, to the nymphs devoted named 120  
The Naiads. In that cave beakers of stone  
And jars are seen ; bees lodge their honey there ;  
And there, on slender spindles of the rock  
The nymphs of rivers weave their wondrous robes.  
Perennial springs water it, and it shows 125  
A twofold entrance ; ingress one affords  
To mortal man, which Northward looks direct,  
But holier is the Southern far ; by that  
No mortal enters, but the Gods alone.  
Familiar with that port before, they push'd 130  
The vessel in ; she, rapid, plow'd the sands  
With half her keel, such rowers urged her on.  
Descending from the well-bench'd bark ashore,  
They lifted forth Ulysses first, with all  
His splendid couch complete, then lay'd him down  
Still wrapt in balmy slumber on the sands. 136

His treasures next, by the Phæacian Chiefs  
At his departure given him as the meed  
Due to his wisdom, at the olive's foot  
They heap'd, without the road, lest while he slept 110,  
Some passing traveller should rifle them.  
Then homeward thence they sped. Nor Ocean's God  
His threats forgot denounced against divine  
Ulysses, but with Jove thus first advised.

Eternal Sire ! I shall no longer share 115  
Respect and reverence among the Gods,  
Since now Phæacia's mortal race have ceased  
To honour me, though from myself derived.  
It was my purpose, that by many an ill  
Harrass'd, Ulysses should have reach'd his home, 150  
Although to intercept him, whose return  
Thyself had promised, ne'er was my intent.  
But him fast-sleeping swiftly o'er the waves  
They have conducted, and have set him down  
In Ithaca, with countless gifts enrich'd, 155  
With brass, and tissued raiment, and with gold ;  
Much treasure ! more than he had home convey'd  
Even had he arrived with all his share  
Allotted to him of the spoils of Troy.

To whom the cloud-assembler God replied. 160  
What hast thou spoken, Shaker of the shores,  
Wide-ruling Neptune ? Fear not ; thee the Gods  
Will ne'er despise ; dangerous were the deed  
To cast dishonour on a God by birth  
More ancient, and more potent far than they. 165  
But if, profanely rash, a mortal man

Should dare to slight thee, to avenge the wrong  
Some future day is ever in thy power.  
Accomplish all thy pleasure, thou art free.

Him answer'd then the Shaker of the shores. 170  
Jove cloud-enthroned! that pleasure I would soon  
Perform as thou hast said, but that I watch  
Thy mind continual, fearful to offend.  
My purpose is, now to destroy amid  
The dreary Deep yon fair Phæacian bark, 175  
Return'd from safe conveyance of her freight ;  
So shall they waft such wanderers home no more,  
And she shall hide their city, to a rock  
Transform'd of mountainous o'ershadowing size.

Him then Jove answer'd, gatherer of the clouds.  
Perform it, O my brother, and the deed 181  
Thus done, shall best be done ;—What time the people  
Shall from the city her approach desery,  
Fix her to stone transform'd, but still in shape  
A gallant bark, near to the coast, that all 185  
May wonder, seeing her transform'd to stone  
Of size to hide their city from the view.

These words once heard, the Shaker of the shores  
Instant to Scheria, maritime abode  
Of the Phæacians, went. Arrived, he watch'd. 190  
And now the flying bark full near approach'd,  
When Neptune, meeting her, with outspread palm  
Depress'd her at a stroke, and she became  
Deep-rooted stone. Then Neptune went his way.  
Phæacia's ship-ennobled sons meantime 195  
Conferring stood, and thus in accents wing'd,  
The amazed spectator to his fellow spake.

Ah ! who hath sudden check'd the vessel's course  
Homeward ? This moment she was all in view.

Thus they, unconscious of the cause, to whom 200  
Aleinöüs, instructing them, replied.

Ye Gods ! a prophecy now strikes my mind  
With force, my father's. He was wont to say—  
Neptune resents it, that we safe conduct  
Natives of every region to their home. 205

He also spake, prophetic, of a day  
When a Phæacian gallant bark, return'd  
After conveyance of a stranger hence,  
Should perish in the dreary Deep, and changed  
To a huge mountain, cover all the town. 210

So spake my father, all whose words we see  
This day fulfill'd. Thus, therefore, act we all  
Unanimous ; henceforth no longer bear  
The stranger home, when such shall here arrive ;  
And we will sacrifice, without delay, 215  
Twelve chosen bulls to Neptune, if, perchance,  
He will commiserate us, and forbear  
To hide our town behind a mountain's height.

He spake, they, terrified, the bulls prepared.  
Thus all Phæacia's Senators and Chiefs 220  
His altar compassing, in prayer adored  
The Ocean's God. Meantime Ulysses woke,  
Unconscious where ; stretch'd on his native soil  
He lay, and knew it not, long time exiled.  
For Pallas, progeny of Jove, a cloud 225  
Drew dense around him, that ere yet agnized  
By others, he might wi-dom learn from her,  
Neither to citizens, nor yet to friends

Reveal'd, nor even to his own espoused,  
Till, first, he should avenge complete his wrongs 230  
Domestic from those suitors proud sustain'd.

All objects, therefore, in the Hero's eyes  
Seem'd alien, foot-paths long, commodious ports,  
Heaven-climbing rocks, and trees of amplest growth.  
Arising, fixt he stood, his native soil 235  
Contemplating, till with expanded palms  
Both thighs he smote, and plaintive thus began.

Ah me! what mortal race inhabits here?

Rude are they, contumacious and unjust,  
Or hospitable, and who fear the Gods? 240

Where now shall I secrete these numerous stores?

Where wander I, myself? I would that still

Phaeacians own'd them, and I had arrived

In the dominions of some other King

Magnanimous, who would have entertain'd 245

And sent me to my native home secure!

Now, neither know I where to place my wealth,

Nor can I leave it here, lest it become

Another's prey. Alas! Phaeacia's Chiefs

Not altogether wise I deem or just, 250

Who have misplaced me in another land,

Promised to bear me to the pleasant shores

Of Ithaca, but have not so perform'd.

Jove, guardian of the suppliant's rights, who all

Transgressors marks, and punishes all wrong, 255

Avenge me on the treacherous race!—but hold—

I will revise my stores, so shall I know

If they have left me here of aught despoil'd.

So saying, he number'd carefully the gold,  
 The vases, tripods bright, and tissued robes,                   260  
 But nothing miss'd of all. Then he bewail'd  
 His native isle, with pensive steps and slow  
 Pacing the border of the billowy flood,  
 Forlorn ; but while he wept, Pallas approach'd,  
 In form a shepherd stripling, girlish fair                   265  
 In feature, such as are the sons of Kings ;  
 A sumptuous mantle o'er his shoulders hung  
 Twice-folded, sandals his nice feet upbore,  
 And a smooth javelin glitter'd in his hand.  
 Ulysses, joyful at the sight, his steps                   270  
 Turn'd brisk toward her, whom he thus address'd.

Sweet youth ! since thee, of all mankind, I first  
 Encounter in this land unknown, all hail !  
 Come not with purposes of harm to me !  
 These save, and save me also. I prefer                   275  
 To thee, as to some God, my prayer, and clasp  
 Thy knees a suppliant. Say, and tell me true,  
 What land ? what people ? who inhabit here ?  
 Is this some isle delightful, or a shore  
 Of fruitful main-land sloping to the sea ?                   280

Then Pallas thus, Goddess cerulean-eyed.  
 Stranger ! thou sure art simple, or hast dwelt  
 Far distant hence, if of this land thou ask.  
 It is not, trust me, of so little note,  
 But known to many, both to those who dwell                   285  
 Toward the sun-rise, and to others placed  
 Behind it, distant in the dusky West.  
 Rugged it is, not yielding level course

To the swift steed, and yet no barren spot,  
 However small, but rich in wheat and wine ; 290  
 Nor wants it rain or fertilizing dew,  
 But pasture green to goats and beeves affords,  
 Trees of all kinds, and fountains never dry.  
 Ithaca therefore, stranger, is a name  
 Known even at Troy, a city, by report, 295  
 At no small distance from Achaia's shore.

The Goddess ceased ; then, toil-enduring Chief  
 Ulysses, happy in his native land,  
 (So taught by Pallas, progeny of Jove)  
 In accents wing'd her answering, utter'd prompt 300  
 Not truth, but figments to truth opposite,  
 For guile in him stood never at a pause.

O'er yonder flood, even in spacious<sup>2</sup> Crete  
 I heard of Ithaca, where now, it seems,  
 I have myself with these my stores arrived ; 305  
 Not richer stores than, flying thence, I left  
 To my own children ; for from Crete I fled  
 For slaughter of Orsilochns the swift,  
 Son of Idomeneus, whom none in speed  
 Could equal throughout all that spacious isle. 310  
 His purpose was to plunder me of all  
 My Trojan spoils, which to obtain much woe  
 I had in battle and by storms endured,  
 For that I would not gratify his Sire,  
 Fighting beside him in the fields of Troy, 315

<sup>2</sup> Homer dates all the fictions of Ulysses from Crete, as if he meant to pass a similiar censure on the Cretans to that quoted by St. Paul—*Κρητες αει ψευται*.



But led a different band. Him from the field  
 Returning homeward, with my brazen spear  
 I smote, in ambush waiting his return  
 At the road-side, with a confederate friend.  
 Unwonted darkness over all the heavens 320  
 That night prevailed, nor any eye of man  
 Observed us, but unseen I slew the youth.  
 No sooner then with my sharp spear of life  
 I had bereft him, than I sought a ship  
 Mann'd by renown'd Phæacians, whom with gifts 325  
 Part of my spoils, and by requests, I won.  
 I bade them land me on the Pyliau shore,  
 Or in fair Elis by the Epeans ruled;  
 But they, reluctant, were by violent winds  
 Driven devious thence, for fraud they purposed none.  
 Thus through constraint we here arrived by night, 331  
 And with much difficulty push'd the ship  
 Into safe harbour, nor was mention made  
 Of food by any, though all needed food,  
 But disembark'd in haste, on shore we lay. 335  
 I, weary, slept profound, and they my goods  
 Forth heaving from the bark, beside me placed  
 The treasures on the sea-beach where I slept,  
 Then reëmbarking, to the populous coast  
 Steer'd of Sidonia, and me left forlorn. 340

He ceased : then smiled Minerva azure-eyed  
 And stroak'd his cheek, in form a woman now,  
 Beauteous, majestic, in all elegant arts  
 Accomplish'd, and with accents wing'd replied.

Who passes thee in artifice well-framed 345

And in imposture various, need shall find  
Of all his policy, although a God.  
Canst thou not cease, inventive as thou art  
And subtle, from the wiles which thou hast loved  
Since thou wast infant, and from tricks of speech 350  
Delusive, even in thy native land ?  
But come, dismiss we these ingenious shifts  
From our discourse, in which we both excel ;  
For thou of all men in expedients most  
Abound'st and eloquence, and I, throughout 355  
All heaven have praise for wisdom and for art.  
And know'st thou not thine Athenæan aid,  
Pallas, Jove's daughter, who in all thy toils  
Assist thee and defend ? I gave thee power  
To engage the hearts of all Phæacia's sons, 360  
And here arrive even now, counsels to frame  
Discrete with thee, and to conceal the stores  
Given to thee by the rich Phæacian Chiefs  
On my suggestion, at thy going thence.  
I will inform thee also what distress 365  
And hardship under thy own palace-roof  
Thou must endure ; which since constraint enjoins,  
Bear patiently, and neither man apprise  
Nor woman that thou hast arrived forlorn  
And vagabond, but silent undergo 370  
What wrongs soever from the hands of men.  
To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied.  
O Goddess ! thou art able to elude,  
Wherever met, the keenest eye of man,  
For thou all shapes assumest ; yet this I know 375

Certainly, that I ever found thee kind,  
 Long as Achaia's Heroes fought at Troy ;  
 But when (the lofty towers of Priam laid  
 In dust,) we re-embark'd, and by the will  
 Of heaven Achaia's fleet was scatter'd wide, 380  
 Thenceforth, O daughter wise of Jove, I thee  
 Saw not, nor thy appearance in my ship  
 Once mark'd, to rid me of my numerous woes,  
 But always bearing in my breast a heart  
 With anguish riven, I roam'd, till by the Gods 385  
 Relieved at length, and till with gracious words  
 Thyself didst in Pharacia's opulent land  
 Confirm my courage, and becamest my guide.  
 But I adjure thee in thy father's name—  
 O tell me truly, (for I cannot hope 390  
 That I have reach'd fair Ithaca ; I tread  
 Some other soil, and thou affirm'st it mine  
 To mock me merely, and deceive,) oh say—  
 Am I in Ithaca ? in truth, at home ?  
 Thus then Minerva the corulean-eyed. 395  
 Such caution ever in thy breast prevails  
 Distrustful ; but I know thee eloquent,  
 With wisdom and with ready thought endued,  
 And cannot leave thee therefore thus distress'd.  
 For what man, save Ulysses, new-return'd 400  
 After long wanderings, would not pant to see  
 At once his home, his children, and his wife ?  
 But thou preferr'st neither to know nor ask  
 Concerning them, till some experience first  
 Thou make of her whose wasted youth is spent 405

In barren solitude, and who in tears  
Ceaseless her nights and woeful days consumes.  
I ne'er was ignorant, but well foreknew  
That not till after loss of all thy friends  
Thou should'st return ; but loth I was to oppose 410  
Neptune, my father's brother, sore incensed  
For his son's sake deprived of sight by thee.  
But, I will give thee proof—come now—survey  
These marks of Ithaca, and be convinced.

This is the port of Phorcys, sea-born sage : 415  
That, the huge olive at the haven's head ;  
Fast by it, thou behold'st the pleasant cove  
Umbrageous, to the nymphs devoted named  
The Naiads ; this the broad-arch'd cavern is  
Where thou wast wont to offer to the nymphs 420  
Many a whole hecatomb ; and yonder stands  
The mountain Neritus with forests cloathed.

So saying, the Goddess scatter'd from before  
His eyes all darkness, and he knew the land.  
Then felt Ulysses, Hero toil-inured. 425  
Transport unutterable, seeing plain  
Once more his native isle. He kiss'd the glebe,  
And with uplifted hands the nymphs adored.

Nymphs, Naiads, Jove's own daughters ! I despair'd  
To see you more, whom yet with happy vows 430  
I now can hail again. Gifts, as of old,  
We will hereafter at your shrines present,  
If Jove-born Pallas, huntress of the spoils.  
Grant life to me, and manhood to my son.

Then Pallas, blue-eyed progeny of Jove. 435

Take courage ; trouble not thy mind with thoughts  
 Now needless. Haste—delay not—far within  
 This hallow'd cave's recess place we at once  
 Thy precious stores, that they may thine remain,  
 Then muse together on thy wisest course. 440

So saying, the Goddess enter'd deep the cave  
 Caliginous, and its secret nooks explored  
 From side to side ; meantime Ulysses brought  
 All his stores into it, the gold, the brass,  
 And robes magnificent, his gifts received 445  
 From the Phæacians ; safe he lodged them all,  
 And Pallas, daughter of Jove ægis-arm'd,  
 Closed fast, herself, the cavern with a stone.

Then, on the consecrated olive's root  
 Both seated, they in consultation plann'd 450  
 The deaths of those injurious suitors proud,  
 And Pallas, blue-eyed Goddess, thus began.

Laertes' noble son, Ulysses ! think  
 By what means likeliest thou shalt assail  
 Those shameless suitors, who have now controul'd 455  
 Three years thy family, thy matchless wife  
 With language amorous and with spousal gifts  
 Urging importunate ; but she, with tears  
 Watching thy wish'd return, hope gives to all,  
 By messages of promise sent to each, 460  
 Framing far other purposes the while.

Then answer thus Ulysses wise return'd.  
 Ah, Agamemnon's miserable fate  
 Had surely met me in my own abode,  
 But for thy gracious warning, power divine ! 465

Come then—Devise the means ; teach me, thyself,  
The way to vengeance, and my soul inspire  
With daring fortitude, as when we loosed  
Her radiant frontlet from the brows of Troy.  
Would'st thou with equal zeal, O Pallas ! aid 170  
Thy servant here, I would encounter thrice  
An hundred enemies, let me but perceive  
Thy dread divinity my prompt ally.

Him answer'd then Pallas cœrulean-eyed.  
And such I will be ; not unmark'd by me, 175  
(Let once our time of enterprize arrive)  
Shalt thou assail them. Many, as I judge,  
Of those proud suitors who devour thy wealth  
Shall leave their brains then on thy palace-floor.  
But come. Behold ! I will disguise thee so 180  
That none shall know thee ; I will parch the skin  
On thy fair body ; I will cause thee shed  
Thy wavy locks ; I will enfold thee round  
In such a kirtle as the eyes of all  
Shall loath to look on ; and I will deform 185  
With blurring rheums thy eyes, so vivid erst ;  
So shall the suitors deem thee, and thy wife,  
And thy own son whom thou didst leave at home,  
Some sordid wretch obscure. But seek thou first  
Thy swine-herd's mansion ; he, alike, intends 190  
Thy good, and loves affectionate thy son  
And thy Penelope ; thou shalt find the swain  
Tending his herd ; they feed beneath the rock  
Corax, at side of Arethusa's fount,  
On acorns dieted, nutritious food 195

To them, and drinking of the limpid stream.  
 There waiting, question him of thy concerns,  
 While I from Sparta praised for women fair  
 Call home thy son Telemachus, a guest  
 With Menelaus now, whom to consult 500  
 In spacious Lacedaemon he is gone,  
 Anxious to learn if yet his father lives.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied.  
 And why, alas ! all-knowing as thou art,  
 Him left'st thou ignorant ? was it that he, 505  
 He also, wand'ring wide the barren Deep,  
 Might suffer woe, while these devour his wealth ?

Him answer'd then Pallas cerulean-eyed.  
 Grieve thou not much for him. I sent him forth  
 Myself, that there arrived, he might acquire 510  
 Honour and fame. No sufferings finds he there,  
 But in Atrides' palace safe resides,  
 Enjoying all abundance. Him, in truth,  
 The suitors watch close ambush'd on the Deep,  
 Intent to slay him ere he reach his home, 515  
 But shall not as I judge, till of themselves  
 The earth hide some who make thee, now, a prey.

So saying, the Goddess touch'd him with a wand.  
 At once o'er all his agile limbs she parch'd  
 The polish'd skin ; she wither'd to the root 520  
 His wavy locks, and cloathed him with the hide  
 Deform'd of wrinkled age ; she charged with rheum-  
 His eyes before so vivid, and a cloak  
 And kirtle gave him, tatter'd both, and foul,  
 And smutch'd with smoke ; then casting over all 525

An huge old deer-skin bald, with a long staff  
She furnish'd him, and with a wallet patch'd  
On all sides, dangling by a twisted thong.

Thus all their plan adjusted, different ways  
They took, and she, seeking U'lysses' son,  
To Lacedæmon's spacious realm repair'd.

530





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THE ODYSSEY.

—  
BOOK XIV.

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**ARGUMENT OF THE FOURTEENTH BOOK.**

**Ulysses arriving at the house of Eumæus, is hospitably entertained, and spends the night there.**

THE ODYSSEY.

## BOOK XIV.

LEAVING the haven-side, he turn'd his steps  
 Into a rugged path, which over hills  
 Mantled with trees led him to the abode  
 By Pallas mention'd of his noble<sup>1</sup> friend  
 The swine-herd, who of all Ulysses' train  
 Watch'd with most diligence his rural stores.  
 Him sitting in the vestibule he found  
 Of his own airy lodge commodious, built  
 Amidst a level lawn. That structure neat  
 Eumæus, in the absence of his Lord,  
 Had raised, himself, with stones from quarries hewn,  
 Unaided by Laertes or the Queen.  
 With tangled thorns he fenced it safe around,  
 And with contiguous stakes riven from the trunks  
 Of solid oak black-grain'd hemm'd it without.

<sup>1</sup> Διὸς ἰφιορβόζ.—The swine-herd's was therefore in those days, and in that country, an occupation honourable as well as useful. Barnes deems the epithet *ῥιός* significant of his noble birth. Vide Clarke in loco.

Twelve pennis he made within, all side by side,  
Lairs for his swine, and fast-immured in each  
Lay fifty pregnant females on the floor.  
The males all slept without, less numerous far,  
Thim'd by the princely wooers at their feasts 20  
Continual, for to them he ever sent  
The fattest of his saginated charge.  
Three hundred, still, and sixty brawns remained.  
Four mastiffs in adjoining kennels lay,  
Resembling wild-beasts, nourish'd at the board 25  
Of the illustrious steward of the styes.  
Himself sat fitting sandals to his feet,  
Carved from a stain'd ox-hide. Four hinds he kept,  
Now busied here and there; three in the pennis  
Were occupied; meantime, the fourth had sought 30  
The city, whither, for the suitors use,  
With no good will, but by constraint, he drove  
A boar, that sacrificing to the Gods,  
The imperious guests might on his flesh regale.

Soon as those clamorous watch-dogs the approach 35  
Saw of Ulysses, baying loud, they ran  
Toward him; he, as ever, well-advised,  
Squatted, and let his staff fall from his hand.  
Yet foul indignity he had endured  
Even there, at his own farm, but that the swain, 40  
Following his dogs in haste, sprang through the porch  
To his assistance, letting fall the hide.  
With chiding voice and vollied stones he soon  
Drove them apart, and thus his Lord bespake.

Old man! one moment more, and these my dogs 4

Had, past doubt, worried thee, who should'st have proved,  
So slain, a source of obloquy to me.

But other pangs the Gods, and other woes  
To me have given, who here lamenting sit  
My godlike master, and his fatted swine 50  
Nourish for others' use, while he, perchance,  
A wanderer in some foreign city seeks  
Fit sustenance, and none obtains, if still  
Indeed he live, and view the light of day.

But, old friend ! follow me into the house, 55  
That thou, at least, with plenteous food refresh'd,  
And cheer'd with wine sufficient, may'st disclose  
Both who thou art, and all that thou hast borne.

So saying, the generous swine-herd introduced  
Ulysses, and thick bundles spread of twigs 60  
Beneath him, cover'd with the shaggy skin  
Of a wild goat, of which he made his couch  
Easy and large ; the Hero, so received,  
Rejoiced, and thus his gratitude express'd.

Jove grant thee and the Gods above, my host, 65  
For such beneficence thy chief desire !

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
My guest ! I should offend, treating with scorn  
The stranger, though a poorer should arrive  
Than even thyself ; for all the poor that are, 70  
And all the strangers are the care of Jove.  
Little, and with good will, is all that lies  
Within my scope ; no man can much expect  
From servants living in continual fear  
Under young masters ; for the Gods, no doubt, 75

Have intercepted my own Lord's return,  
 From whom great kindness I had, else, received,  
 With such a recompense as servants gain  
 From generous masters, house and competence,  
 And lovely wife from many a wooer won, 80  
 Whose industry should have requited well  
 His goodness, with such blessing from the Gods  
 As now attends me in my present charge.  
 Much had I, therefore, prosper'd, had my Lord  
 Grown old at home ; but he hath died.—I would 85  
 That the whole house of Helen, one and all,  
 Might perish too, for she hath many slain  
 Who, like my master, went glory to win  
 For Agamemnon in the fields of Troy.

So saying, he girdled, quick, his tunic close, 90  
 And issuing, sought the styes ; thence bringing two  
 Of the imprison'd herd, he slaughter'd both,  
 Singed them, and slash'd and spitted them, and placed  
 The whole well-roasted banquet, spits and all,  
 Reeking before Ulysses ; last with flour 9  
 He sprinkled them, and filling with rich wine  
 His ivy-goblet, to his master sat  
 Opposite, whom inviting thus he said.

Now, eat, my guest ! such as a servant may  
 I set before thee, neither large of growth 10  
 Nor fat ; the fatted—those the suitors eat,  
 Fearless of heaven, and pitiless of man.  
 Yet deeds unjust as theirs the blessed Gods  
 Love not ; they honour equity and right.  
 Even an hostile band when they invade

A foreign shore, which by consent of Jove  
They plunder, and with laden ships depart,  
Even they with terrors quake of wrath divine.  
But these are wiser ; these must sure have learn'd  
From some true oracle my master's death, 110  
Who neither deign with decency to woo,  
Nor yet to seek their homes, but boldly waste  
His substance, shameless now, and sparing nought.  
Jove ne'er hath given us yet the night or day  
When with a single victim, or with two 115  
They would content them, and his empty jars  
Witness how fast the squanderers use his wine.  
Time was when he was rich indeed ; such wealth  
No Hero own'd on yonder continent,  
Nor yet in Ithaca ; no twenty Chiefs 120  
Could match with all their treasures his alone ;  
I tell thee their amount. Twelve herds of his  
The mainland<sup>2</sup> graze ; as many flocks of sheep ;  
As many droves of swine ; and hirelings there  
And servants of his own feed for his use, 125  
As many numerous flocks of goats ; his goats,  
(Not fewer than eleven numerous flocks)  
Here also graze the margin of his fields  
Under the eye of servants well-approved,  
And every servant, every day, brings home 130  
The goat, of all his flock largest and best.

<sup>2</sup> It may be proper to suggest that Ulysses was lord of part of the continent opposite to Ithaca—viz.—of the peninsula Neriscus or Leuca, which afterward became an island, and is now called Santa Maura. F.



But as for me, I have these swine in charge,  
Of which, selected with exactest care  
From all the herd, I send the prime to them.

He ceased; meantime Ulysses ate and drank 13  
Voracious, meditating, mute, the death  
Of those proud suitors. His repast, at length,  
Concluded, and his appetite sufficed,  
Eumæus gave him, charged with wine, the cup  
From which he drank himself; he, glad, received 14  
The boon, and in wing'd accents thus began.

My friend, and who was he, wealthy and brave  
As thou describest the Chief, who purchased thee?  
Thou say'st he perish'd for the glory-sake  
Of Agamemnon. Name him; I, perchance, 11  
May have beheld the Hero. None can say  
But Jove and the inhabitants of heaven  
That I ne'er saw him, and may not impart  
News of him; I have roam'd through many a clime.

To whom the noble swineherd thus replied. 12  
Alas, old man! no traveller's tale of him  
Will gain his consort's credence, or his son's;  
For wanderers, wanting entertainment, forge  
Falsehoods for bread, and wilfully deceive.  
No wanderer lands in Ithaca, but he seeks 1  
With feign'd intelligence my mistress' ear;  
She welcomes all, and while she questions each  
Minutely, from her lids lets fall the tear  
Affectionate, as well beseems a wife  
Whose mate hath perish'd in a distant land. 1  
Thou could'st thyself, no doubt, my hoary friend!

(Would any furnish thee with decent vest  
And mantle) fabricate a tale with ease ;  
Yet sure it is that dogs and fowls, long since,  
His skin have stript, or fishes of the Deep 165  
Have eaten him, and on some distant shore  
When'd in deep sands his mouldering bones are laid.  
So hath he perish'd ; whence, to all his friends,  
But chiefly to myself, sorrow of heart ;  
For such another Lord, gentle as he, 170  
Wherever sought, I have no hope to find,  
Though I should wander even to the house  
Of my own father. Neither yearns my heart  
So feelingly (though that desiring too)  
To see once more my parents and my home, 175  
As to behold Ulysses yet again.

Ah stranger ! absent as he is, his name  
Fills me with reverence, for he loved me much,  
Cared for me much, and though we meet no more,  
Holds still an elder brother's part in me. 180

Him answer'd then, the Hero toil-inured.  
My friend ! since his return, in thy account,  
Is an event impossible, and thy mind  
Always incredulous that hope rejects,  
I shall not slightly speak, but with an oath.— 185  
Ulysses comes again ; and I demand  
No more, than that the boon such news deserves,  
Be given me soon as he shall reach his home.  
Then give me vest and mantle fit for wear,  
Which, ere that hour, much as I need them both, 190  
I neither ask, nor will accept from thee.

For him whom poverty can force aside  
 From truth—I hate him as the gates of hell.  
 Be Jove, of all in heaven, my witness first,  
 Then, this thy hospitable board, and last, 195  
 The household Gods of the illustrious Chief  
 Himself, Ulysses, to whose gates I go,  
 That all my words shall surely be fulfill'd.  
 In this same year Ulysses shall arrive,  
 Ere, this month closed, another month succeed, 200  
 He shall return, and punish all who dare  
 Insult his consort and his noble son.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
 Old friend! that boon thou ne'er wilt earn from me :  
 Ulysses comes no more. But thou thy wine 205  
 Drink quietly, and let us find, at length,  
 Some other theme ; recall not this again  
 To my remembrance, for my soul is grieved  
 Oft as reminded of my honour'd Lord.  
 Let the oath rest, and let Ulysses come 210  
 Even as myself, and as Penelope,  
 And as his ancient father, and his son  
 Godlike Telemachus, all wish he may.  
 Ay—there I feel again—nor cease to mourn  
 His son Telemachus ; who, when the Gods 215  
 Had given him growth like a young plant, and I  
 Well hoped that nought inferior he should prove  
 In person or in mind to his own sire,  
 Hath lost, through influence human or divine,  
 I know not how, his sober intellect, 220  
 And after tidings of his sire is gone

To far-famed Pylus ; his return, meantime,  
In ambush hidden the proud suitors wait,  
That the whole house may perish of renown'd  
Arcesias, named in Ithaca no more. 225  
But whether he have fallen or 'scaped, let him  
Rest also, whom Saturnian Jove protect !  
But come, my ancient guest ! now let me learn  
Thy own afflictions ; answer me in truth.  
Who, and whence art thou ? in what city born ? 230  
Where dwell thy parents ? in what kind of ship  
Camest thou ? the mariners, why brought they thee  
To Ithaca ? and of what land are they ?  
For that on foot thou found'st us not, is sure.

Him answer'd then Ulysses ever-wise. 235  
I will with truth resolve thee ; and if here  
Within thy cottage sitting, we had wine  
And food for many a day, and business none  
But to regale at ease while others toil'd,  
I could exhaust the year complete, my woes 240  
Rehearsing, nor at last, rehearse entire  
My sorrows by the will of heaven sustain'd.

I boast me sprung from ancestry renown'd  
In spacious Crete ; son of a wealthy sire,  
Who other sons train'd numerous in his house, 245  
Born of his wedded wife : but he begat  
Me on his purchased concubine, whom yet  
Dear as his other sons in wedlock born  
Castor Hylacides esteem'd and loved,  
For him I boast my father. Him in Crete, 250  
While yet he lived, all revered as a God,

So rich, so prosperous, and so blest was he  
With sons of highest praise. But death, the doom  
Of all, him bore to Pluto's drear abode,  
And his illustrious sons among themselves 25  
Portion'd his goods by lot; to me, indeed,  
They gave a dwelling, and but little more;  
Yet, for my virtuous qualities, I won  
A wealthy bride, for I was neither vain  
Nor base, forlorn as thou perceivest me now. 26  
But thou canst guess, I judge, viewing the straw  
What once was in the ear. Ah! I have borne  
Much tribulation; heap'd and heavy woes.  
Courage and phalanx-breaking might had I  
From Mars and Pallas; at what time I drew, 26½  
(Planning some dread exploit) an ambush forth  
Of our most valiant Chiefs, no boding fears  
Of death seized *me*, but foremost far of all  
I sprang to fight, and pierced the flying foe.  
Such was I once in arms. But household toils 27  
Sustain'd for children's sake, and carking cares  
To enrich a family, were not for me.  
My pleasures were the gallant bark, the din  
Of battle, the smooth spear and glittering shaft,  
Objects of dread to others, but which me 27½  
The Gods disposed to love and to enjoy.  
Thus different minds are differently amused;  
For ere Achaia's fleet had sail'd to Troy,  
Nine times was I commander of an host  
Embark'd against a foreign foe, and found 28  
In all those enterprizes great success.

From the whole booty, first, what pleased me most  
Choosing, and sharing also much by lot  
I rapidly grew rich, and had thenceforth  
Among the Cretans reverence and respect. 285  
But when loud-thundering Jove that voyage dire  
Ordain'd, which loosed the knees of many a Greek,  
Then to Idomeneus and me they gave  
The charge of all their fleet, which how to avoid  
We found not, so importunate the cry 290  
Of the whole host impell'd us to the task.  
There fought we nine long years, and in the tenth  
(Priam's proud city pillaged) steer'd again  
Our galleys homeward, which the Gods dispersed.  
Then was it that deep-planning Jove devised 295  
For me much evil. One short month, no more,  
I gave to joys domestic, in my wife  
Happy, and in my babes, and in my wealth,  
When the desire seized me with several ships  
Well-rigg'd, and furnish'd all with gallant crews, 300  
To sail for Ægypt; nine I fitted forth,  
To which stout mariners assembled fast.  
Six days the chosen partners of my voyage  
Feasted, to whom I numerous victims gave  
For sacrifice, and for their own regale. 305  
Embarking on the seventh from spacious Crete,  
Before a clear breeze prosperous from the North  
We glided easily along, as down  
A river's stream; nor one of all my ships  
Damage incurr'd, but healthy and at ease 310  
We sat, while gales well-managed urged us on.

The fifth day thence, smooth-flowing Nile we reach'd,  
And safe I moor'd in the Ægyptian stream.  
Then, charging all my mariners to keep  
Strict watch for preservation of the ships, 315  
I order'd spies into the hill-tops ; but they  
Under the impulse of a spirit rash  
And hot for quarrel, the well-cultured fields  
Pillaged of the Ægyptians, captive led  
Their wives and little ones, and slew the men. 320  
Soon was the city alarm'd, and at the cry  
Down came the citizens, by dawn of day,  
With horse and foot and with the gleam of arms  
Filling the plain. Then Jove with panic dread  
Struck all my people ; none found courage more 325  
To stand, for mischief swarm'd on every side.  
There, numerous by the glittering spear we fell  
Slaughter'd, while others they conducted thence  
Alive to servitude. But Jove himself  
My bosom with this thought inspired, (I would 330  
That, dying, I had first fulfill'd my fate  
In Ægypt, for new woes were yet to come !)  
Loosing my brazen casque, and slipping off  
My buckler, there I left them on the field,  
Then cast my spear away, and seeking, next, 335  
The chariot of the sovereign, clasp'd his knees,  
And kiss'd them. He, by my submission moved,  
Deliver'd me, and to his chariot-seat  
Raising, convey'd me weeping to his home.  
With many an ashen spear his warriors sought 340  
To slay me, (for they now grew fiery-wroth)

But he through fear of hospitable Jove,  
Chief punisher of wrong, saved me alive.  
Seven years I there abode, and much amass'd  
Among the Ægyptians, gifted by them all ; 345  
But, in the eighth revolving year, arrived  
A shrew'd Phœnician, in all fraud adept,  
Hungry, and who had numerous harm'd before,  
By whom I also was cajoled, and lured  
To attend him to Phœnicia, where his house 350  
And his possessions lay ; there I abode  
A year complete his inmate ; but (the days  
And months accomplish'd of the rolling year,  
And the new seasons entering on their course,)  
To Libya then, on board his bark, by wiles 355  
He won me with him, partner of the freight  
Profess'd, but destined secretly to sale,  
That he might profit largely by my price.  
Not unsuspecting, yet constrain'd to go,  
With this man I embark'd. A cloudless gale 360  
Propitious blowing from the North, our ship  
Ran right before it through the middle sea,  
In the offing over Crete ; but adverse Jove  
Destruction plann'd for them and death the while.  
For, Crete now left afar, and other land 365  
Appearing none, but sky alone and sea,  
Right o'er the hollow bark Saturnian Jove  
A cloud cœrulean hung, darkening the Deep.  
Then, thundering oft, he hurl'd into the bark  
His bolts ; she smitten by the fires of Jove, 370  
Quaked all her length ; with sulphur fill'd she reek'd,



And o'er her sides precipitated, plunged  
Like gulls the crew, forbidden by that stroke  
Of wrath divine to hope their country more.  
But Jove himself, when I had cast away 375  
All hope of life, conducted to my arms  
The strong tall mast, that I might yet escape.  
Around that beam I clung, driving before  
The stormy blast. Nine days complete I drove,  
And on the tenth dark night, the rolling flood 380  
Immense convey'd me to Thesprotia's shore.  
There me the Hero Phidon, generous King  
Of the Thesprotians, freely entertain'd ;  
For his own son discovering me with toil  
Exhausted and with cold, raised me, and thence 385  
Led me humanely to his father's house,  
Who cherish'd me, and gave me fresh attire.  
There heard I of Ulysses, whom himself  
Had entertain'd, he said, on his return  
To his own land ; he shew'd me also gold, 390  
Brass, and bright steel elaborate, whatsoe'er  
Ulysses had amass'd, a store to feed  
A less illustrious family than his  
To the tenth generation, so immense  
His treasures in the royal palace lay. 395  
Himself, he said, was to Dodona gone,  
There, from the towering oaks of Jove to ask  
Counsel divine, if openly to land  
(After long absence) in his opulent realm  
Of Ithaca, be best, or in disguise. 400  
To me the monarch swore, in his own hall

Pouring libation, that the ship was launch'd,  
And the crew ready for his conduct home.  
But me he first dismiss'd, for, as it chanced,  
A ship lay there of the Thesprotians, bound 405  
To green Dulichium's isle. He bade the crew  
Bear me to King Acastus with all speed ;  
But them far other thoughts pleased more, and thoughts  
Of harm to me, that I might yet be plunged  
In deeper gulfs of woe than I had known. 410  
For when the billow-cleaving bark had left  
The land remote framing combined a plot  
Against my liberty, they stripp'd my vest  
And mantle, and this tatter'd raiment foul  
Gave me instead, which thy own eyes behold. 415  
At even-tide reaching the cultured coast  
Of Ithaca, they left me bound on board  
With tackle of the bark, and quitting ship  
Themselves, made hasty supper on the shore.  
But me, meantime, the Gods easily loosed 420  
By their own power, when with this wrapper vile  
Around my brows, sliding into the sea  
At the ship's stern, I lay'd me on the flood.  
With both hands oaring thence my course, I swam  
Till past all ken of theirs ; then landing where 425  
Thick covert of luxuriant trees I mark'd,  
Close couchant down I lay ; they muttering loud,  
Paced to and fro, but deeming farther search  
Unprofitable, soon embark'd again.  
Thus baffling all their search with ease, the Gods 430  
Conceal'd and led me thence to the abode  
Of a wise man, dooming me still to live.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
Alas ! my most compassionate guest !  
Thou hast much moved me by this tale minute 435  
Of thy sad wanderings and thy numerous woes.  
But speaking of Ulysses, thou hast pass'd  
All credence ; I at least can give thee none.  
Why, noble as thou art, should'st thou invent  
Palpable falsehoods ? as for the return 440  
Of my regretted Lord, myself I know  
That had he not been hated by the Gods  
Unanimous, he had in battle died  
At Troy, or (that long doubtful war, at last,  
Concluded,) in his people's arms at home. 445  
Then universal Greece had raised his tomb,  
And he had even for his son atchieved  
Immortal glory ; but alas ! by beaks  
Of harpies torn, unseemly sight, he lies.  
Here is my home the while ; I never seek 450  
The city, unless summon'd by discrete  
Penelope to listen to the news  
Brought by some stranger, whencesoe'er arrived.  
Then, all, alike inquisitive, attend,  
Both who regret the absence of our King, 455  
And who rejoice gratuitous to gorge  
His property ; but as for me, no joy  
Find I in listening after such reports,  
Since an Ætolian cozen'd me, who found  
(After long wandering over various lands 460  
A fugitive for blood,) my lone retreat.  
Him warm I welcom'd, and with open arms  
Received, who bold affirm'd that he had seen

My master with Idomeneus in Crete  
His ships refitting shatter'd by a storm, 465  
And that in summer with his godlike band  
He would return, bringing great riches home,  
Or else in autumn. And thou ancient guest  
Forlorn ! since thee the Gods have hither led,  
Seek not to gratify me with untruths 470  
And to deceive me, since for no such cause  
I shall respect or love thee, but alone  
By pity influenced, and the fear of Jove.

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied.  
Thou hast, in truth, a most incredulous mind, 475  
Whom even with an oath I have not moved,  
Or aught persuaded. Come then—let us make  
In terms express a covenant, and the Gods  
Who hold Olympus, witness to us both !  
If thy own Lord at this thy house arrive, 480  
Thou shalt dismiss me decently attired  
In vest and mantle, that I may repair  
Hence to Dulichium, whither I would go.  
But if thy Lord come not, then, gathering all  
Thy servants, headlong hurl me from a rock, 485  
That other mendicants may fear to lie.

To whom the generous swine-herd in return.  
Yes, stranger ! doubtless I should high renown  
Obtain for virtue among men, both now  
And in all future times, if, having first 490  
Invited thee, and at my board regaled,  
I next should slay thee ; then my prayers would mount,  
Past question, swiftly to Saturnian Jove.

But the hour calls to supper, and ere long,  
The partners of my toils will come prepared 495  
To spread the board with no unsavoury cheer.

Thus they conferr'd. And now the swains arrived,  
Driving their charge, which fast they soon enclosed  
Within their customary pennis, and loud  
The hubbub was of swine prison'd within. 500  
Then call'd the master to his rustic train.  
Bring ye the best, that we may set him forth  
Before my friend from foreign climes arrived,  
With whom ourselves will also feast, who find  
The bright-tusk'd multitude a painful charge, 505  
While others, at no cost of theirs, consume  
Day after day, the profit of our toils.

So saying, his wood for fuel he prepared,  
And, dragging thither a well fatted brawn  
Of the fifth year, his servants held him fast 510  
At the hearth-side. Nor fail'd the master swain  
To adore the Gods, (for wise and good was he,)  
But consecration of the victim, first,  
Himself performing, cast into the fire  
The forehead bristles of the tusky boar, 515  
Then pray'd to all above, that safe at length,  
Ulysses might regain his native home.  
Then lifting an huge shive that lay beside  
The fire, he smote the boar, and dead he fell.  
Next, piercing him, and scorching close his hair, 520  
They carved him quickly, and Eumæus spread  
Thin slices crude taken from every limb  
O'er all his fat, then other slices cast,

Sprinkling them first with meal, into the fire.  
 The rest they slash'd and scored, and roasted well, 525  
 And placed it, heap'd together, on the board.  
 Then rose the good Eumæus to his task  
 Of distribution, for he understood  
 The hospitable entertainer's part.  
 Seven-fold partition of the banquet made, 530  
 He gave, with previous prayer, to Maia's<sup>3</sup> son  
 And to the nymphs one portion of the whole,  
 Then served his present guests, honouring first  
 Ulysses with the boar's perpetual chine ;  
 By that distinction just his master's heart 535  
 He gratified, and thus the Hero spake.

Eumæus ! be thou as beloved of Jove  
 As thou art dear to me, whom, though attired  
 So coarsely, thou hast served with such respect !

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply. 540  
 Eat noble stranger ! and refreshment take  
 Such as thou may'st ; God<sup>4</sup> gives, and God denies  
 At his own will, for He is Lord of all.

He said, and to the everlasting Gods  
 The firstlings sacrificed of all, then made 545

<sup>3</sup> Mercury.

<sup>4</sup> Θεός—without a relative, and consequently signifying God in the abstract, is not unfrequently found in Homer, though fearing to give offence to serious minds unacquainted with the original, I have not always given it that force in the translation. But here the sentiment is such as fixes the sense intended by the author with a precision that leaves me no option. It is observable too, that—δυνάται γὰρ πάντα—is an inscription of power such as the poet never makes to his Jupiter.

Libation, and the cup placed in the hands  
Of city-spoiler Laertiades  
Sitting beside his own allotted share.  
Meantime, Mesaulius bread dispensed to all,  
Whom in the absence of his Lord, himself 550  
Eumæus had from Taphian traders bought  
With his own proper goods, at no expence  
Either to old Laertes or the Queen.  
And now, all stretch'd their hands toward the feast  
Reeking before them, and when hunger none 555  
Felt more or thirst, Mesaulius clear'd the board.  
Then, fed to full satiety, in haste  
Each sought his couch. Black came a moonless night,  
And Jove all night descended fast in showers,  
With howlings of the ever watery West. 560  
Ulysses, at that sound, for trial's sake  
Of his good host, if putting off his cloak  
He would accommodate him, or require  
That service for him at some other hand,  
Addressing thus the family, began. 565  
Hear now, Eumæus, and ye other swains  
His fellow-labourers ! I shall somewhat boast,  
By wine befool'd, which forces even the wise  
To carol loud, to titter and to dance,  
And words to utter, oft, better suppress'd. 570  
But since I have begun, I shall proceed,  
Prating my fill. Ah might those days return  
With all the youth and strength that I enjoy'd,  
When in close ambush, once, at Troy we lay !  
Ulysses, Menelaus, and myself 575

Their chosen coadjutor, led the band.  
Approaching to the city's lofty wall  
Through the thick bushes and the reeds that gird  
The bulwarks, down we lay flat in the marsh,  
Under our arms. Then, Boreas blowing loud, 580  
A rueful night came on, frosty and charged  
With snow that blanched us thick as morning rime,  
And every shield with ice was chrystall'd o'er.  
The rest with cloaks and vests well cover'd, slept  
Beneath their bucklers ; I alone my cloak, 585  
Improvident, had left behind, no thought  
Conceiving of a season so severe ;  
Shield and belt, therefore, and nought else had I.  
The night, at length, nigh spent, and all the stars  
Declining in their course, with elbow thrust 590  
Against Ulysses' side I roused the Chief,  
And thus address'd him ever prompt to hear.

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd !  
I freeze to death. Help me, or I am lost.  
No cloak have I ; some evil dæmon, sure, 595  
Beguiled me of all prudence, that I came  
Thus sparsely clad ; I shall, I must expire.

So I ; he, ready as he was in arms  
And counsel both, the remedy at once  
Devised, and thus, low-whispering, answer'd me. 600

Hush ! lest perchance some other hear—He said,  
And leaning on his elbow, spake aloud.

My friends ! all hear—a monitory dream  
Hath reach'd me, for we lie far from the ships.  
Haste, therefore, one of you, with my request 605



*To Agamemnon, Atreus son, our Chief,  
That he would reinforce us from the camp.*

*He spake, and at the word, Andraemon's son  
Thoas arose, who, casting off his cloak,  
Ran thence toward the ships, and folded warm      610  
Within it, there lay I till dawn appear'd.  
Oh for the vigour of such youth again !  
Then, some good peasant here, either for love  
Or for respect, would cloak a man like me,  
Whom, now, thus sordid in attire ye scorn.      615*

*To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
My ancient guest ! I cannot but approve  
Thy narrative, nor hast thou utter'd aught  
Unseemly, or that needs excuse. No want  
Of raiment, therefore, or of aught beside      620  
Needful to solace penury like thine,  
Shall harm thee here ; yet, at the peep of dawn  
Gird thy own tatters to thy loins again ;  
For *we* have no great store of cloaks to boast,  
Or change of vests, but, singly, one for each.      625  
But when Ulysses' son shall once arrive,  
He will himself with vest and mantle both  
Cloath thee, and send thee whither most thou would'st.*

*So saying, he rose, and nearer made his couch  
To the hearth-side, spreading it thick with skins      630  
Of sheep and goats ; then lay the Hero down,  
O'er whom a shaggy mantle large he threw,  
Which oft-times served him with a change, when rough  
The winter's blast and terrible arose.  
So was Ulysses bedded, and the youths      635*

*Slept all beside him ; but the master-swain  
Those not his place of rest so far remote  
From his rude charge, but to the outer court  
With his nocturnal furniture, repair'd,  
Gladdening Ulysses' heart that one so true      640  
In his own absence kept his rural stores.  
Athwart his sturdy shoulders first he slung  
His faulchion keen, then wrapp'd him in a cloak  
Thick woven, winter proof; he lifted, next,  
The skin of a well-thriven goat, in bulk      645  
Surpassing others, and his javelin took  
Sharp-pointed, with which dogs he drove and men.  
Thus arm'd, he sought his wonted couch beneath  
A hollow rock where the herd slept, secure  
From the sharp current of the Northern blast.      650*



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THE ODYSSEY.

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BOOK XV.

#### ARGUMENT OF THE FIFTEENTH BOOK.

Telemachus, admonished by Minerva, takes leave of Menelaus, but ere he sails, is accosted by Theoclymenus, a prophet of Argos, whom at his earnest request he takes on board. In the meantime Eumæus relates to Ulysses the means by which he came to Ithaca. Telemachus arriving there, gives orders for the return of his bark to the city, and repairs himself to Eumæus.

# THE ODYSSEY.

## BOOK XV.

MEANTIME to Lacedæmon's spacious vale  
Minerva went, that she might summon thence  
Ulysses' glorious son to his own home.  
Arrived, she found Telemachus reposed  
And Nestor's son beneath the vestibule 5  
Of Menelaus, mighty Chief; she saw  
Pisistratus in bands of gentle sleep  
Fast-bound, but not Telemachus; his mind  
No rest enjoy'd, by filial cares disturb'd  
Amid the silent night, when drawing near 10  
To his couch side, the Goddess thus began.  
Thou canst no longer prudently remain  
A wanderer here, Telemachus! thy home  
Abandon'd, and those haughty suitors left  
Within thy walls; fear lest, partition made 15  
Of thy possessions, they devour the whole,  
And in the end thy voyage bootless prove.  
Delay not; from brave Menelaus ask  
Dismission hence, that thou may'st find at home

Thy spotless mother, whom her brethren urge      20  
 And her own father even now to wed  
 Eurymachus, in gifts and in amount  
 Of proffer'd dower superior to them all.  
 Some treasure, else, shall haply from thy house  
 Be taken, such as thou wilt grudge to spare.      25  
 For well thou know'st how woman is disposed;  
 Her whole anxiety is to encrease  
 His substance whom she weds; no care hath she  
 Of her first children, or remembers more  
 The buried husband of her virgin choice.      30  
 Returning, then, to her of all thy train  
 Whom thou shalt most approve, the charge commit  
 Of thy concerns domestic, till the Gods  
 Themselves shall guide thee to a noble wife.  
 Hear also this, and mark it. In the frith      35  
 Samos the rude, and Ithaca between,  
 The chief of all her suitors thy return  
 In vigilant ambush wait, with strong desire  
 To slay thee, ere thou reach thy native shore,  
 But shall not, as I judge, till the earth hide      40  
 Many a lewd reveller at thy expence.  
 Yet steer thy galley from those isles afar,  
 And voyage make by night; some guardian God  
 Shall save thee, and shall send thee prosperous gales.  
 Then, soon as thou attain'st the nearest shore      45  
 Of Ithaca, dispatching to the town  
 Thy bark with all thy people, seek at once  
 The swine-herd; for Eumæus is thy friend.  
 There sleep, and send him forth into the town

*With tidings to Penelope, that safe* 50  
*Thou art restored from Pylus home again.*

She said, and sought the Olympian heights sublime.  
Then, with his heel shaking him, he awoke  
The son of Nestor, whom he thus address'd.

Rise, Nestor's son, Pisistratus ! lead forth 55  
The steeds, and yoke them. We must now depart.

To whom the son of Nestor thus replied.  
Telemachus ! what haste soe'er we feel,  
We can by no means prudently attempt  
To drive by night, and soon it will be dawn. 60  
Stay, therefore, till the Hero, Atreus' son,  
Spear-practised Menelaus shall his gifts  
Place in the chariot, and with kind farewell  
Dismiss thee ; for the guest in memory holds  
Through life, the host who treats him as a friend. 65

Scarce had he spoken, when the golden dawn  
Appearing, Menelaus, from the side  
Of beauteous Helen risen, their bed approach'd,  
Whose coming when Telemachus perceived,  
Cloathing himself hastily in his vest 70  
Magnificent, and o'er his shoulders broad  
Casting his graceful mantle, at the door  
He met the Hero, whom he thus address'd.

Atrides Menelaus, Chief renown'd !  
Dismiss me hence to Ithaca again, 75  
My native isle, for I desire to go.

Him answer'd Menelaus famed in arms.  
Telemachus ! I will not long delay  
Thy wish'd return. I disapprove alike



The host whose assiduity extreme 80  
 Distresses, and whose negligence offends ;  
 The middle course is best ; alike we err,  
 Him thrusting forth whose wish is to remain,  
 And hindering the impatient to depart.  
 This only is true kindness—To regale 85  
 The present guest, and speed him when he would.  
 Yet stay, till thou shalt see my splendid gifts  
 Placed in thy chariot, and till I command  
 My women from our present stores to spread  
 The table with a plentiful repast. 90  
 For both the honour of the guest demands,  
 And his convenience also, that he eat  
 Sufficient, entering on a length of road.  
 But if through Hellas thou wilt take thy way  
 And traverse Argos, I will then myself 95  
 Attend thee ; thou shalt journey with my steeds  
 Beneath thy yoke, and I will be thy guide  
 To many a city, whence we shall not go  
 Ungratified, but shall in each receive  
 Some gift at least, tripod, or charger bright, 100  
 Or golden chalice, or a pair of mules.

To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
 Atrides Menelaus, Chief renown'd !  
 I would at once depart, (for guardian none  
 Of my possessions have I left behind,) 105  
 Lest, while I seek my father, I be lost  
 Myself, or lose what I should grudge to spare.

Which when the valiant Menelaus heard,  
 He bade his spouse and maidens spread the board

At once with remnants of the last regale. 110

Then Eteoneus came, Boethus' son  
Newly arisen, for nigh at hand he dwelt,  
Whom Menelaus bade kindle the fire  
By which to dress their food, and he obey'd.  
He, next, himself his fragrant chamber sought, 115

Not sole, but by his spouse and by his son  
Attended, Megapenthes. There arrived  
Where all his treasures lay, Atrides, first,  
Took forth, himself, a goblet, then consign'd  
To his son's hand an argent beaker bright. 120

Meantime, beside her coffers Helen stood  
Where lay her variegated robes, fair works  
Of her own hand. Producing one, in size  
And in magnificence the chief, a star  
For splendour, and the lowest placed of all, 125  
Loveliest of her sex, she bore it thence.

Then, all proceeding through the house, they sought  
Telemachus again, whom reaching, thus  
The Hero of the golden locks began.

May Jove the Thunderer, dread Juno's mate, 130  
Grant thee Telemachus! such voyage home  
As thy own heart desires! accept from all  
My stores selected as the richest far  
And noblest gift for finish'd beauty—This.

I give thee wrought elaborate a cup, 135  
Itself all silver, bound with lip of gold.  
It is the work of Vulcan, which to me  
The Hero Phædimus imparted, King  
Of the Sidonians, when on my return,  
Beneath his roof I lodged. I make it thine. 140

So saying, the Hero, Atreus' son, the cup  
Placed in his hands, and Megapenthes set  
Before him, next, the argent beaker bright ;  
But lovely Helen drawing nigh, the robe  
Presented to him, whom she thus address'd. 145

I also give thee, oh my son, a gift,  
Which seeing, thou shalt think on her whose hands  
Wrought it ; a present on thy nuptial day  
For thy fair spouse ; meantime, repose it safe  
In thy own mother's keeping. Now, farewell ! 150  
Prosperous and happy be thy voyage home !

She ceased, and gave it to him, who the gift  
Accepted glad, and in the chariot-chest  
Pisistratus the Hero all disposed,  
Admiring them the while. They, following, next, 155  
The Hero Menelaus to his hall

Each on his couch or on his throne reposed.  
A maiden, then, with golden ewer charged  
And silver bowl, pour'd water on their hands,  
And spread the polish'd table, which with food 160  
Various, selected from her present stores,  
The mistress of the household charge supplied.

Boetheus' son stood carver, and to each  
His portion gave, while Megapenthes, son  
Of glorious Menelaus, served the cup. 165

Then, all with outstretch'd hands the feast assail'd,  
And when nor hunger more nor thirst of wine  
They felt, Telemachus and Nestor's son  
Yoked the swift steeds, and, taking each his seat  
In the resplendent chariot, drove at once 170  
Right through the sounding portico abroad.

But Menelaus, Hero amber-hair'd,  
A golden cup bearing with richest wine  
Replete in his right hand, follow'd them forth,  
That not without libation first perform'd 175  
They might depart ; he stood before the steeds,  
And drinking first, thus, courteous, them bespake.

Health to you both, young friends ! and from my lips  
Like greeting bear to Nestor, royal Chief,  
For he was ever as a father kind 180  
To me, while the Achaians warr'd at Troy.

To whom Telemachus discrete replied.  
And doubtless, so we will ; at our return  
We will report to him, illustrious Prince !  
Thy every word. And oh, I would to heaven 185  
That reaching Ithaca, I might at home  
Ulysses hail as sure, as I shall hence  
Depart, with all benevolence by thee  
Treated, and rich in many a noble gift.

While thus he spake, on his right hand appear'd 190  
An eagle ; in his talons pounced he bore  
A white-plumed goose domestic, newly taken  
From the house court. Ran females all and males  
Clamorous after him ; but he the steeds  
Approaching on the right, sprang into air. 195  
That sight rejoicing and with hearts revived  
They view'd, and thus Pisistratus his speech  
Amid them all to Menelaus turn'd.

Now, Menelaus, think, illustrious Chief !  
If us, this omen, or thyself regard. 200

While warlike Menelaus musing stood

What answer fit to frame, Helen meantime,  
His spouse long-stoled preventing him, began.

Hear me ; for I will answer as the Gods  
Teach me, and as I think shall come to pass. 205

As he, descending from his place of birth  
The mountains, caught our pamper'd goose away,  
So shall Ulysses, after many woes  
And wanderings to his home restored, avenge  
His wrongs, or even now is at his home 210  
For all those suitors sowing seeds of woe.

To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
Oh grant it Jove, Juno's high-thundering mate !  
So will I, there arrived, with vow and prayer  
Thee worship, as thou wert thyself divine. 215

He said, and lash'd the coursers ; fiery they  
And fleet, sprang through the city to the plain.  
All day the yoke on either side they shook,  
Journeying swift ; and now the setting sun  
To gloomy evening had resign'd the roads, 220  
When they to Phœræ came, and in the house  
Of good Diocles slept, their liberal host,  
Whose sire Orsilochus from Alpheus sprang.  
But when Aurora, daughter of the Dawn,  
Look'd rosy from the East, yoking their steeds, 225  
They in the sumptuous chariot sat again.  
Forth through the vestibule they drove, and through  
The sounding portico, when Nestor's son  
Plied brisk the scourge, and willing flew the steeds.  
Thus whirl'd along, soon they approach'd the gates 230  
Of Pylus, when Telemachus, his speech  
Turning to his companion, thus began.

How, son of Nestor ! shall I win from thee  
Not promise only but performance kind  
Of my request ? we are not bound alone 235  
To friendship by the friendship of our sires,  
But by equality of years, and this  
Our journey shall unite us still the more.  
Bear me not, I entreat thee, noble friend !  
Beyond the ship, but drop me at her side, 240  
Lest ancient Nestor, though against my will,  
Detain me in his palace through desire  
To feast me, for I dread the least delay.

He spake ; then mused Pisistratus how best  
He might effect the wishes of his friend, 245  
And thus at length resolved ; turning his steeds  
With sudden deviation to the shore  
He sought the bark, and placing in the stern  
Both gold and raiment, the illustrious gifts  
Of Menelaus, thus, in accents wing'd 250  
With ardour, urged Telemachus away.

Dispatch, embark, summon thy crew on board,  
Ere my arrival notice give of thine  
To the old King ; for vehement I know  
His temper, neither will he let thee hence, 255  
But, hasting hither, will himself enforce  
Thy longer stay, that thou may'st not depart  
Ungifted ; nought will fire his anger more.

So saying, he to the Pylian city urged  
His steeds bright-maned, and at the palace-gate 260  
Arrived of Nestor speedily ; meantime  
Telemachus exhorted thus his crew.

My gallant friends ! set all your tackle, climb  
The sable bark, for I would now return.

He spake ; they heard him gladly, and at once 265  
All fill'd the benches. While his voyage he  
Thus expedited, and beside the stern  
To Pallas sacrifice perform'd and pray'd,  
A stranger, born remote, who had escaped  
From Argos' fugitive for blood, a seer, 270  
And of Melampus' progeny approach'd.  
Melampus, in old time, in Pylus dwelt,  
Mother of flocks, alike for wealth renown'd  
And the magnificence of his abode.  
He, flying from the far-famed Pylian King, 275  
The mighty Neleus, migrated at length  
Into another land, whose wealth, the while,  
Neleus by force possess'd a year complete.  
Meantime, Melampus in the house endured  
Of Phylacus imprisonment and woe, 280  
And burn'd with wrath for Neleus' daughter sake  
By fell Erynnis kindled in his heart.  
But 'scaping death, he drove the lowing beeves  
From Phylace to Pylus, well avenged  
His numerous injuries at Neleus' hands 285

<sup>1</sup> Iphycus the son of Phylacus had seized and detained cattle belonging to Neleus ; Neleus ordered his nephew Melampus to recover them, and as security for his obedience seized on a considerable part of his possessions. Melampus attempted the service, failed, and was cast into prison ; but at length escaping, accomplish'd his errand, vanquish'd Neleus in battle, and carried off his daughter Pero, whom Neleus had promised to the brother of Melampus, but had afterward refused her.

Sustain'd, and gave into his brother's arms  
 King Neleus' daughter fair, the promised bride.  
 To Argos steed-renown'd he journey'd next,  
 There destined to inhabit and to rule  
 Multitudes of Achæians. In that land 290  
 He married, built a palace, and became  
 Father of two brave sons, Antiphates  
 And Mantius; to Antiphates was born  
 The brave Oïcleus; from Oïcleus sprang  
 Amphiaræus, demagogue renown'd, 295  
 Whom with all tenderness, and as a friend  
 Alike the Thunderer and Apollo prized;  
 Yet reach'd he not the bounds of hoary age,  
 But by his mercenary<sup>2</sup> consort's arts  
 Persuaded, met his destiny at Thebes. 300  
 He 'gat Alcmaëon and Amphilocheus.  
 Mantius was also father of two sons,  
 Clytus and Polyphides. Clytus pass'd  
 From earth to heaven, and dwells among the Gods,  
 Stolen by Aurora for his beauty's sake. 305  
 But (brave Amphiaræus once deceased)  
 Phœbus exalted Polyphides far  
 Above all others in the prophet's part.  
 He, anger'd by his father, roam'd away  
 To Hyperesia, where he dwelt renown'd 310  
 Throughout all lands, the oracle of all.  
 His son, named Theoclymenus, was he

<sup>2</sup> His wife Eryphyle, bribed by Polynices, persuaded him, though aware that death awaited him at that city, to go to Thebes, where he fell accordingly.



Who now approach'd ; he found Telemachus  
Libation offering in his bark, and prayer,  
And in wing'd accents ardent him address'd. 315

Ah, friend ! since sacrificing in this place  
I find thee, by these sacred rites and those  
Whom thou ador'st, and by thy own dear life,  
And by the lives of these thy mariners  
I beg true answer ; hide not what I ask. 320  
Who art thou ? whence ? where born ? and sprung from  
whom ?

To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
I will inform thee, stranger ! and will solve  
Thy questions with much truth. I am by birth  
Ithacan, and Ulysses was my sire. 325

But he hath perish'd by a woeful death,  
And I, believing it, with those have plow'd  
The Ocean hither, interested to learn  
A father's fate long absent from his home.

Then answer'd godlike Theoclymenus. 330  
I also am a wanderer, having slain

A man of my own tribe ; brethren and friends  
Numerous had he in Argos steed-renown'd,  
And powerful are the Achaians dwelling there.  
From them, through terrour of impending death, 335  
I fly, a banish'd man henceforth for ever.

Ah, save a suppliant fugitive ! lest death  
O'ertake me, for I doubt not their pursuit.

Whom thus Telemachus answer'd discrete.  
I shall not, be assured, since thou desirest 340  
To join me, chace thee from my bark away.

Follow me, therefore, and with us partake,  
In Ithaca, what best the land affords.

So saying, he at the stranger's hand received  
His spear, which on the deck he lay'd, then climb'd  
Himself the bark, and seated in the stern, 346  
At his own side placed Theoclymenus.

They cast the hawsers loose; then with loud voice  
Telemachus exhorted all to hand  
The tackle, whom his sailors prompt obey'd. 350

The tall mast heaving, in its socket deep  
They lodged it, and its cordage braced secure,  
Then, straining at the halyards, hoised the sail.  
Fair wind, and blowing fresh through æther pure  
Minerva sent them, that the bark might run 355

Her nimblest course through all the briny way.  
Now sank the sun, and dusky evening dimm'd  
The waves, when, driven by propitious Jove,  
His bark stood right for Pheræ; thence she stretch'd  
To sacred Elis, where the Epeans rule, 360  
And through the sharp Echinades he next  
Steer'd her, uncertain whether fate ordain'd  
His life or death, surprizal or escape.

Meantime Ulysses and the swineherd ate  
Their cottage-mess, and the assistant swains 365  
Theirs also; and when hunger now and thirst  
Had ceased in all, Ulysses thus began,  
Proving the swineherd, whether friendly still,  
And anxious for his good, he would entreat  
His stay, or thence hasten him to the town. 370

Eumæus, and all ye his servants, hear !

THE ODYSSEY.

It is my purpose, lest I wear thee out,  
Thee and thy friends, to seek at early dawn  
The city, there to beg :—but give me first  
Needful instructions, and a trusty guide  
Who may conduct me thither ; there my task  
Must be to roam the streets ; some hand humane  
Perchance shall give me a small pittance there,  
A little bread, and a few drops to drink.  
Ulysses' palace I shall also seek, 380  
And to discrete Penelope report  
My tidings ; neither shall I fail to mix  
With those imperious suitors, who, themselves  
Full-fed, may spare perhaps some boon to me.  
Me shall they find, in whatsoc'er they wish 385  
Their ready servitor, for (understand  
And mark me well,) the herald of the skies,  
Hermes, from whom all actions of mankind  
Their grace receive and polish, is my friend ;  
So that in menial offices I fear 390  
No rival, whether I be call'd to heap  
The hearth with fuel, or dry wood to cleave,  
To roast, to carve, or to distribute wine,  
As oft the poor are wont who serve the great.  
To whom, Eumæus ! at those words displeased, 395  
Thou didst reply. Gods ! how could such a thought  
Possess thee, stranger ? surely thy resolve  
Is altogether fixt to perish there,  
If thou indeed hast purposed with that throng  
To mix, whose riot and outrageous acts 400  
Of violence echo through the vault of heaven.

None, such as thou, serve *them* ; their servitors  
Are youths well-cloak'd, well-vested ; sleek their head  
And smug their countenances ; such alone  
Are their attendants, and the polish'd boards 40  
Groan overcharged with bread, with flesh, with wine  
*Rest here content ; for neither me nor these*  
*Thou weariest aught, and when Ulysses' son*  
*Shall come, he will with vest and mantle fair*  
*Cloath thee, and send thee whither most thou would'st*  
To whom, Ulysses, Hero toil-inured. 411

I wish thee, O Eumæus ! dear to Jove  
As thou art dear to me, for this reprieve  
Vouchsafed me kind, from wandering and from woe !  
No worse condition is of mortal man 415  
Than his who wanders ; for the poor man, driven  
By woe and by misfortune homeless forth,  
A thousand miseries, day by day, endures.  
Since thou detain'st me then, and bidd'st me wait  
His coming, tell me if the father still 420  
Of famed Ulysses live, whom, going hence,  
He left so nearly on the verge of life ?  
And lives his mother ? or have both deceased  
Already, and descended to the shades ?

To whom the master swineherd thus replied. 425  
I will inform thee, and with strictest truth,  
Of all that thou hast ask'd. Laertes lives,  
But supplication offering to the Gods  
Ceaseless, to free him from a weary life,  
So deeply his long-absent son he mourns, 430

And the dear consort of his early youth,  
Whose death is his chief sorrow, and hath brought  
Old age on him, or ere its date arrived.  
She died of sorrow for her glorious son,  
And died deplorably<sup>3</sup>; may never friend 435  
Of mine, or benefactor die as she!  
While yet she lived, dejected as she was,  
I found it yet some solace to converse  
With her, who rear'd me in my childish days,  
Together with her lovely youngest-born 440  
The Princess Ctimena; for side by side  
We grew, and I, scarce honour'd less than she.  
But soon as our delightful prime we both  
Attain'd, to Samos her they sent, a bride,  
And were requited with rich dower; but me 445  
Clothed handsomely with tunic and with vest,  
And with fair sandals furnish'd, to the field  
She order'd forth, yet loved me still the more.  
I miss her kindness now; but gracious heaven  
Prosper the work on which I here attend; 450  
Hence have I food, and hence I drink, and hence  
Refresh sometimes a worthy guest like thee.  
But kindness none experience I, or can,  
From fair Penelope (my mistress now)  
In word or action, so is the house cursed 455  
With that lewd throng. Glad would the servants be  
Might they approach their mistress, and receive  
Advice from her; glad too to eat and drink,

<sup>3</sup> She is said to have hanged herself.

And somewhat bear each to his rural home,  
For perquisites are every servant's joy. 460

Then answer thus, Ulysses wise return'd.  
Alas ! good swain, Eumæus, how remote  
From friends and country wast thou forced to roam  
Even in thy infancy ! But tell me true.  
The city where thy parents dwelt, did foes 465  
Pillage it ? or did else some hostile band  
Surprising thee alone, on herd or flock  
Attendant, bear thee with them o'er the Deep,  
And sell thee at this Hero's house, who pay'd  
Doubtless for *thee* no sordid price or small ? 470

To whom the master swinherd in reply.  
Stranger ! since thou art curious to be told  
My story, silent listen, and thy wine  
At leisure quaff. The nights are longest now,  
And such as time for sleep afford, and time 475  
For pleasant conference ; neither were it good  
That thou should'st to thy couch before thy hour.  
Since even sleep is hurtful, in excess.

Whoever here is weary, and desires  
Early repose, let him depart to rest, 480  
And at the peep of day, when he hath fed  
Sufficiently, drive forth my master's herd ;  
But we with wine and a well-furnish'd board  
Supplied, will solace mutually derive  
From recollection of our sufferings past ; 485  
For who hath much endured, and wander'd far,  
Finds the recital even of sorrow sweet.  
Now hear thy question satisfied ; attend !

There is an island (thou hast heard, perchance,  
*Of such an isle,)* named Syria<sup>1</sup>; it is placed 490  
 Above Ortygia, and a dial<sup>2</sup> owns  
 True to the tropic changes of the year.  
 No great extent she boasts, yet is she rich  
 In cattle and in flocks, in wheat and wine.  
 No famine knows that people, or disease 495  
 Noisome of all that elsewhere seize the race  
 Of miserable man; but when old age  
 Steals on the the citizens, Apollo, arm'd  
 With silver bow and bright Diana come,  
 Whose gentle shafts dismiss them soon to rest. 500  
 Two cities share between them all the isle,  
 And both were subject to my father's sway  
 Ctesius Ormenides, a godlike Chief.  
 It chanced that from Phœnicia, famed for skill  
 In arts marine, a vessel thither came 505  
 By sharpers mann'd, and laden deep with toys.  
 Now, in my father's family abode  
 A fair Phœnician, tall, full-sized, and skill'd  
 In works of elegance, whom they beguiled.  
 While she wash'd linen on the beach, beside 510

<sup>1</sup> Not improbably the isthmus of Syracuse, an island, perhaps, or peninsula at that period, or at least imagined to be such by Homer. The birth of Diana gave fame to Ortygia. F.

<sup>2</sup> Ὀθι τροπαὶ ἡλίου.—The Translator has rendered the passage according to that interpretation of it to which several of the best expositors incline. Nothing can be so absurd as to suppose, that Homer, so correct in his geography, could mean to place a Mediterranean island under the Tropic.

The ship, a certain mariner of those  
*Seduced her; for all women, even the wise*  
*And sober, feeble prove by love assail'd.*  
*Who was she, he enquired, and whence? nor she*  
*Scruple to tell at once her father's home.* 515

I am of Sidon<sup>6</sup>, famous for her works  
In brass and steel; daughter of Arybas,  
Who rolls in affluence; Taphian pirates thence  
Stole me returning from the field, from whom  
This Chief procured me at no little cost. 520

Then answer thus her paramour return'd.  
Wilt thou not hence to Sidon in our ship,  
That thou may'st once more visit the abode  
Of thy own wealthy parents, and themselves?  
For still they live, and still are wealthy deem'd. 525

To whom the woman. Even that might be,  
Would ye, ye seamen, by a solemn oath  
Assure me of a safe conveyance home.

Then sware the mariners as she required,  
And, when their oath was ended, thus again 530  
The woman of Phœnicia them bespake.

Now, silence! no man henceforth, of you all  
Accost me, though he meet me on the road,  
Or at you fountain; lest some tattler run  
With tidings home to my old master's ear, 535  
Who, with suspicion touch'd, may *me* confine  
In cruel bonds, and death contrive for *you*.  
But be ye close; purchase your stores in haste;

<sup>6</sup> A principal city of Phœnicia.



And when your vessel shall be freighted full,  
Quick send me notice ; for I mean to bring 540  
What gold soever opportune I find,  
And will my passage cheerfully defray  
With still another moveable. I nurse  
The good man's son, an urchin shrewd, of age  
To scamper at my side ; him will I bring, 545  
Whom at some foreign market ye shall prove  
Saleable at what price soe'er ye will.

So saying, she to my father's house return'd.  
They, there abiding the whole year, their ship  
With purchased goods freighted of every kind, 550  
And when her lading now complete, she lay  
For sea prepared, their messenger arrived  
To summon down the woman to the shore.  
A mariner of theirs, subtle and shrewd,  
Then, entering at my father's gate, produced 555  
A splendid collar, gold with amber strung.  
My mother (then at home) with all her maids  
Handling and gazing on it with delight,  
Proposed to purchase it, and he the nod  
Significant, gave unobserved, the while, 560  
To the Phœnician woman, and return'd.  
She, thus inform'd, leading me by the hand  
Went forth, and finding in the vestibule  
The cups and tables which my father's guests  
Had used, (but they were to the forum gone 565  
For converse with their friends assembled there,)  
Convey'd three cups into her bosom-folds,  
And bore them off, whom I a thoughtless child

Accompanied, at the decline of day,  
When dusky evening had embrown'd the shore. 570  
We, stepping nimbly on, soon reach'd the port  
Renown'd, where that Phœnician vessel lay.  
They shipp'd us both, and all embarking cleaved  
Their liquid road by favourable gales,  
Jove's gift, impell'd. Six days we day and night 575  
Continual sail'd, but when Saturnian Jove  
Now bade the seventh bright morn illumine the skies,  
Then shaft-arm'd Dian struck the woman dead.  
At once she pitch'd headlong into the bilge  
Like a sea-coot, whence heaving her again, 580  
The seamen gave her to be fishes' food,  
And I survived to mourn her. But the winds  
And rolling billows them bore to the coast  
Of Ithaca, where with his proper goods  
Laertes bought me. By such means it chanced 585  
That ere I saw the isle in which I dwell.

To whom Ulysses, glorious Chief replied.  
Eumæus! thou hast moved me much, thy woes  
Enumerating thus at large. But Jove  
Hath neighbour'd all thy evil with this good, 590  
That after numerous sorrows thou hast reach'd  
The house of a kind master, at whose hands  
Thy sustenance is sure, and here thou lead'st  
A tranquil life; but I have late arrived,  
City after city of the world explored. 595

Thus mutual they conferr'd, nor leisure found  
Save for short sleep, by morning soon surprised.  
Meantime the comrades of Telemachus

Approaching land, cast loose the sail, and lower'd  
 Alert the mast, then oar'd the vessel in. 600  
 The anchors heaved<sup>7</sup> aground, and hawsers tied  
 Secure, themselves, forth-issuing on the shore,  
 Breakfast prepared, and charged their cups with wine.  
 When neither hunger now, nor thirst remained  
 Unsatisfied, Telemachus began. 605

Push ye the sable bark without delay  
 Home to the city. I will to the field  
 Among my shepherds, and, (my rural works  
 Survey'd,) at eve will to the town return.  
 To morrow will I set before you wine 610  
 And plenteous viands, wages of your toil.

To whom the godlike Theoclymenus.  
 Whither must I, my son? who, of the Chiefs  
 Of rugged Ithaca, shall harbour me?  
 Shall I to thine and to thy mother's house? 615

Then thus Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
 I would invite thee to proceed at once  
 To our abode, since nought should fail thee there  
 Of kind reception, but it were a course  
 Now not adviseable; for I must myself, 620  
 Be absent, neither would my mother's eyes  
 Behold thee, so unfrequent she appears  
 Before the suitors, shunning whom, she sits  
 Weaving continual at the palace-top.  
 But I will name to thee another Chief 625  
 Whom thou may'st seek, Eurymachus, the son

<sup>7</sup> The anchors were lodged on the shore, not plunged as ours.

*Renown'd of prudent Polybus, whom all  
The people here reverence as a God.  
Far noblest of them all is he, and seeks  
More ardent than his rivals far, to wed* 639  
*My mother, and to fill my father's throne.  
But, He who dwells above, Jove only knows  
If some disastrous day be not ordain'd  
For them, or ere those nuptials shall arrive.*

*While thus he spake, at his right hand appear'd, 635  
Messenger of Apollo, on full wing,  
A falcon ; in his pounces clench'd he bore  
A dove, which rending, down he pour'd her plumes  
Between the galley and Telemachus.  
Then calling him apart, the prophet lock'd* 640  
*His hand in his, and thus explain'd the sign.*

*Not undirected by the Gods his flight  
On our right hand, Telemachus ! this hawk  
Hath wing'd propitious ; soon as I perceived  
I knew him ominous.—In all the isle* 645  
*No family of a more royal note  
Than yours is found, and yours shall still prevail.*

*Whom thus Telemachus answer'd discrete.  
Grant heaven, my guest ! that this good word of thine  
Fail not, and soon thou shalt such bounty share* 650  
*And friendship at my hands, that at first sight,  
Whoe'er shall meet thee shall pronounce thee blest.*

*Then, to Piræus thus, his friend approved.  
Piræus, son of Clytius ! (for of all  
My followers to the shore of Pylus, none* 655  
*More prompt than thou hath my desires perform'd,)*

Now also to thy own abode conduct  
This stranger, whom with hospitable care  
C'herish and honour till myself arrive.

To whom Piraus answer'd, spear-renown'd. 660  
Telemachus ! however long thy stay,  
Punctual I will attend him, and no want  
Of hospitality shall he find with me.

So saying, he climb'd the ship, then bade the crew  
Embarking also, cast the hawsers loose, 665  
And each obedient to his bench repaired.  
Meantime Telemachus his sandals bound,  
And lifted from the deck his glittering spear.  
Then as Telemachus had bidden them,  
Son of divine Ulysses, casting loose 670  
The hawsers, forth they push'd into the Deep  
And sought the city ; while with nimble pace  
Proceeding thence, Telemachus attain'd  
The cottage soon where good Eumæus slept,  
The swine-herd, faithful to his numerous charge. 675

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# THE ODYSSEY.



BOOK XVI.

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#### ARGUMENT OF THE SIXTEENTH BOOK.

Telemachus dispatches Eumaus to the city to inform Penelope of his safe return from Pylus ; during his absence, Ulysses makes himself known to his son. The suitors, having watched for Telemachus in vain, arrive again at Ithaca.

## THE ODYSSEY.

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### BOOK XVI.

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It was the hour of dawn, when in the cot  
Kindling fresh fire, Ulysses and his friend  
Noble Eumæus dress'd their morning fare,  
And sent the herdsmen with the swine abroad.  
Seeing Telemachus, the watchful dogs 5  
Bark'd not, but fawn'd around him. At that sight,  
And at the sound of feet which now approach'd,  
Ulysses in wing'd accents thus remark'd.

Eumæus ! certain, either friend of thine  
Is nigh at hand, or one whom well thou know'st ; 10  
Thy dogs bark not, but fawn on his approach  
Obsequious, and the sound of feet I hear.

Scarcely had he ceased, when his own son himself  
Stood in the vestibule. Upsprang at once  
Eumæus wonder-struck, and from his hand 15  
Let fall the cups with which he was employ'd  
Mingling rich wine ; to his young Lord he ran,  
His forehead kiss'd, kiss'd his bright-beaming eyes  
And both his hands, weeping profuse the while.



As when a father holds in his embrace 20  
Arrived from foreign lands in the tenth year  
His darling son, the offspring of his age,  
His only one, for whom he long hath mourn'd,  
So kiss'd the noble peasant o'er and o'er  
Godlike Telemachus, as from death escaped, 25  
And in wing'd accents plaintive thus began.

Light of my eyes, thou comest ; it is thyself,  
Sweetest Telemachus ! I had no hope  
To see thee more, once told that o'er the Deep  
Thou hadst departed for the Pylian coast. 30  
Enter, my precious son ; that I may sooth  
My soul with sight of thee from far arrived,  
For seldom thou thy feeders and thy farm  
Visitest, in the city custom'd much  
To make abode, that thou may'st witness there 35  
The manners of those hungry suitors proud.

To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
It will be so. There is great need, my friend !  
But here, for thy sake, have I now arrived,  
That I may look on thee, and from thy lips 40  
Learn if my mother still reside at home,  
Or have become spouse of some other Chief,  
Leaving untenanted Ulysses' bed  
To be by noisome spiders webb'd around.

To whom the master-swincherd in return. 45  
Not so, she, patient still as ever, dwells  
Beneath thy roof, but all her cheerless days  
Despairing wastes, and all her nights in tears.

So saying, Eumæus at his hand received

His brazen lance, and o'er the step of stone  
Enter'd Telemachus, to whom his sire  
Relinquish'd, soon as he appear'd, his seat,  
But him Telemachus forbidding, said—

Guest, keep thy seat; our cottage will afford  
Some other, which Eumæus will provide. 55

He ceased, and he, returning at the word,  
Reposed again; then good Eumæus spread  
Green twigs beneath, which, cover'd with a fleece,  
Supplied Ulysses' offspring with a seat.

He next disposed his dishes on the board 60  
With relics charged of yesterday; with bread,  
Alert, he heap'd the baskets; with rich wine  
His ivy-cup replenish'd; and a seat  
Took opposite to his illustrious Lord  
Ulysses. They toward the plenteous feast 65  
Stretch'd forth their hands, (and hunger now and thirst  
Both satisfied,) Telemachus, his speech  
Addressing to their generous host, began.

Whence is this guest, my father? How convey'd  
Came he to Ithaca? What country boast 70  
The mariners with whom he here arrived?  
For that on foot he found us not, is sure.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
I will with truth answer thee, O my son!  
He boasts him sprung from ancestry renown'd 75  
In spacious Crete, and hath the cities seen  
Of various lands, by fate ordain'd to roam.  
Even now, from a Thesprotian ship escaped,  
He reach'd my cottage—but he is thy own;

I yield him to thee ; treat him as thou wilt ; 80  
 He is thy suppliant, and depends on thee.

Then thus, Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
 Thy words, Eumæus, pain my very soul.  
 For what security can I afford  
 To any in my house ? myself am young, 85  
 Nor yet of strength sufficient to repel  
 An offer'd insult ; and my mother's mind  
 In doubtful balance hangs, if still with me  
 An inmate, she shall manage my concerns,  
 Attentive only to her absent Lord 90

And her own good report, or shall espouse  
 The noblest of her wooers, and the best  
 Entitled by the splendour of his gifts.  
 But I will give him, since I find him lodged  
 A guest beneath thy roof, tunic and cloak, 95  
 Sword double-edged, and sandals to his feet,  
 With convoy to the country of his choice.  
 Still, if it please thee, keep him here thy guest,  
 And I will send him raiment, with supplies  
 Of all sorts, lest he burthen thee and thine. 100

But where the suitors come, there shall not he  
 With my consent, nor stand exposed to pride  
 And petulance like theirs, lest by some sneer  
 They wound him, and through him, wound also me :  
 For little is it that the boldest can 105  
 Against so many ; numbers will prevail.

Him answer'd then Ulysses toil-inured.  
 Oh amiable and good ! since even I  
 Am free to answer thee, I will avow

My heart within me torn by what I hear 110  
Of those injurious suitors, who the house  
Infest of one noble as thou appear'st.

But say—submittest thou to their controul  
Willingly, or because the people, sway'd  
By some response oracular, incline 115

Against thee? Thou hast brothers, it may chance,  
Slow to assist thee,—for a brother's aid  
Is of importance in whatever cause.

For oh that I had youth as I have will,  
Or that renown'd Ulysses were my sire, 120

Or that myself might wander home again,  
Whereof hope yet remains! then might I lose  
My head, that moment, by an alien's hand,  
If I would fail, entering Ulysses' gate,  
To be the bane and mischief of them all. 125

But if alone to multitudes opposed  
I should perchance be foiled, nobler it were  
With my own people, under my own roof  
To perish, than to witness evermore  
Their unexampled deeds, guests shoved aside, 130  
Maidens dragg'd forcibly from room to room,  
Casks emptied of their rich contents, and them  
Indulging gluttonous appetite day by day  
Enormous, without measure, without end.

To whom, Telemachus, discrete, replied. 135  
Stranger! thy questions shall from me receive  
True answer. Enmity or hatred none  
Subsists the people and myself between,  
Nor have I brothers to accuse, whose aid

Is of importance in whatever cause, 140  
For Jove hath from of old with single heirs  
Our house supplied; Arcesias none begat  
Except Laertes, and Laertes none  
Except Ulysses, and Ulysses me  
Left here his only one, and unenjoy'd. 145  
Thence comes it that our palace swarms with foes;  
For all the rulers of the neighbour-isles,  
Samos, Dulichium, and the forest-crown'd  
Zacynthus, others also rulers here  
In craggy Ithaca, my mother seek 150  
In marriage, and my household stores consume.  
But neither she those nuptial rites abhorr'd  
Refuses absolute, nor yet consents  
To end them; they my patrimony waste  
Meantime, and will destroy me also soon, 155  
As I expect, but heaven disposes all.

Eumæus! haste, my father! bear with speed  
News to Penelope that I am safe,  
And have arrived from Pylus; I will wait  
Till thou return; and well beware that none 160  
Hear thee beside, for I have many foes.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
It is enough. I understand. Thou speak'st  
To one intelligent. But say beside,  
Shall I not also, as I go, inform 165  
Distress'd Laertes? who while yet he mourn'd  
Ulysses only, could o'ersee the works,  
And dicted among his menials oft  
As hunger prompted him; but now, they say,

Since thy departure to the Pylian shore, 170  
He neither eats as he was wont, nor drinks,  
Nor oversees his hinds, but sighing sits  
And weeping, wasted even to the bone.

Him then Telemachus answer'd discrete.  
Hard though it be, yet to his tears and sighs 175  
Him leave we now. We cannot what we would.  
For were the ordering of all events  
Referr'd to our own choice, our first desire  
Should be to see my father's glad return.  
But once thy tidings told, wander not thou 180  
In quest of Him, but hither speed again.  
Rather request my mother that she send  
Her household's governess without delay  
Privately to him ; she shall best inform  
The ancient King that I have safe arrived. 185

He said, and urged him forth, who binding on  
His sandals, to the city bent his way.  
Nor went Eumæus from his home unmark'd  
By Pallas, who in semblance of a fair  
Damsel, accomplish'd in domestic arts, 190  
Approaching to the cottage' entrance, stood.  
Opposite, by Ulysses plain discern'd,  
But to his son invisible ; for the Gods  
Appear not manifest alike to all.  
The mastiffs saw her also, and with tone 195  
Querulous hid themselves, yet bark'd they not.  
She beckon'd him abroad. Ulysses saw  
The sign, and issuing through the outer court,  
Approach'd her, whom the Goddess thus bespake.

Laertes' progeny, for wiles renown'd ! 200  
Disclose thyself to thy own-son, that death  
Concerting and destruction to your foes,  
Ye may the royal city seek, nor long  
Shall ye my presence there desire in vain,  
For I am ardent to begin the fight. 205

Minerva spake, and with her rod of gold  
Touch'd him ; his mantle, first, and vest she made  
Pure as new-blanch'd ; dilating, next, his form,  
She gave dimensions ampler to his limbs ;  
Swarthy again his manly hue became, 210  
Round his full face, and black his bushy chin.  
The change perform'd, Minerva disappear'd,  
And the illustrious Hero turn'd again  
Into the cottage ; wonder at that sight  
Seized on Telemachus ; askance he look'd, 215  
Awe-struck, not unsuspicious of a God,  
And in wing'd accents eager thus began.

Thou art no longer, whom I lately saw,  
Nor are thy cloaths, nor is thy port the same.  
Thou art a God, I know, and dwell'st in heaven. 220  
Oh, smile on us, that we may yield thee rites  
Acceptable, and present thee golden gifts  
Elaborate ; ah spare us, Power divine !

To whom Ulysses, Hero toil-inured.  
I am no God. Why deem'st thou me divine ? 225  
I am thy father, for whose sake thou lead'st  
A life of woe, by violence oppress'd.

So saying, he kiss'd his son, while from his cheeks  
Tears trickled, tears till then, perforce restrain'd.

Telemachus, (for he believed him not  
His father yet,) thus wondering spake again. 230

My father, saidst thou ? no. Thou art not He,  
But some Divinity beguiles my soul  
With mockeries, to afflict me still the more ;  
For never mortal man could so have wrought 235  
By his own power ; some interposing God  
Alone could render thee both young and old,  
For old thou wast of late, and foully clad,  
But wear'st the semblance now of those in heaven !

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied. 240  
Telemachus ! it is not well, my son !  
That thou should'st greet thy father with a face  
Of wild astonishment, and stand aghast.  
Ulysses, save myself, none comes, be sure,  
Such as thou seest, after ten thousand woes 245  
Which I have borne, I visit once again  
My native country in the twentieth year.  
This wonder Athenæan Pallas wrought,  
She cloathed me even in what form she would,  
For so she can. Now poor I seem and old, 250  
Now young again, and clad in fresh attire.  
The Gods who dwell in yonder heaven, with ease  
Dignify or debase a mortal man.

So saying, he sat. Then threw Telemachus  
His arms around his father's neck, and wept. 255  
Desire intense of lamentation seized  
On both ; soft murmurs uttering, each indulged  
His grief, more frequent wailing than the bird,  
(Eagle, or hook-nail'd vulture) from whose nest



Some swain hath stolen her yet unfeather'd young. 260  
So from their eyelids they big drops distill'd  
Of tenderest grief, nor had the setting sun  
Cessation of their weeping seen, had not  
Telemachus his father thus address'd.

What ship convey'd thee to thy native shore, 265  
My father ! and what country boast the crew ?  
For that on foot thou not arrivest, is sure.

Then thus divine Ulysses toil-inured.  
My son ! I will explicit all relate.  
Conducted by Phæacia's maritime sons 270  
I came, a race accustomed to convey  
Strangers who visit them across the Deep.  
Me o'er the billows in a rapid bark  
Borne sleeping, on the shores of Ithaca  
They lay'd ; rich gifts they gave me also, brass, 275  
Gold in full bags, and beautiful attire,  
Which, warn'd from heaven, I have in caves conceal'd.  
By Pallas prompted, hither I repair'd  
That we might plan the slaughter of our foes,  
Whose numbers tell me now, that I may know 280  
How powerful, certainly, and who they are,  
And consultation with my dauntless heart  
May hold, if we be able to contend  
Ourselves with all, or must have aid beside.

Then answer thus his son, discrete, return'd. 285  
My father ! thy renown hath ever rung  
In thy son's ears, and by report thy force  
In arms, and wisdom I have oft been told.  
But terribly thou speak'st ; amazement-fixt

I hear ; can two a multitude oppose, 290  
And valiant warriors all ? For neither ten  
Are they, nor twenty, but more numerous far.  
Learn now their numbers. Fifty youths and two  
Came from Dulichium ; they are chosen men,  
And six attendants follow in their train ; 295  
From Samos twenty youths and four arrive,  
Zacynthus also of Achaia's sons  
Sends twenty more, and our own island adds,  
Herself, her twelve chief rulers ; Medon, too,  
Is there the herald, and the bard divine, 300  
With other two, intendants of the board.  
Should we within the palace, we alone,  
Assail them all, I fear lest thy revenge  
Unpleasant to thyself and deadly prove,  
Frustrating thy return. But recollect— 305  
Think, if thou canst, on whose confederate arm  
Strenuous on our behalf we may rely.

To him replied his patient father bold.  
I will inform thee. Mark. Weigh well my words.  
Will Pallas and the everlasting Sire 310  
Alone suffice ? or need we other aids ?

Then answer thus Telemachus return'd.  
Good friends indeed are they whom thou hast named,  
Though throned above the clouds ; for their controul  
Is universal both in earth and heaven. 315

To whom Ulysses, toil-worn Chief renown'd.  
Not long will they from battle stand aloof,  
When once within my palace, in the strength  
Of Mars, to sharp decision we shall urge

The suitors. But thyself at early dawn 320  
Our mansion seek, that thou may'st mingle there  
With that imperious throng; me in due time  
Eumæus to the city shall conduct,  
In form a miserable beggar old.  
But should they with dishonourable scorn 325  
Insult me, thou unmoved my wrongs endure,  
And should they even drag me by the feet  
Abroad, or smite me with the spear, thy wrath  
Refraining, gently counsel them to cease  
From such extravagance; but well I know 330  
That cease they will not, for their hour is come.  
And mark me well; treasure what now I say  
Deep in thy soul. When Pallas shall, herself,  
Suggest the measure, then shaking my brows,  
I will admonish thee; thou at the sign, 335  
Remove what arms soever in the hall  
Remain, and in the upper palace safe  
Dispose them; should the suitors, missing them,  
Perchance interrogate thee, then reply  
Gently—I have removed them from the smoke; 340  
For they appear no more the arms which erst  
Ulysses, going hence to Ilium, left,  
But smirch'd and sullied by the breath of fire.  
This weightier reason (thou shalt also say,)  
Jove taught me; lest, intoxicate with wine, 345  
Ye should assault each other in your brawls,  
Shaming both feast and courtship; for the view  
Itself of arms incites to their abuse.  
Yet leave two faulchions for ourselves alone,

Two spears, two bucklers, which with sudden force, 350  
Impetuous we will seize, and Jove all-wise  
Their valour shall, and Pallas, steal away.

This word store also in remembrance deep—  
If mine in truth thou art, and of my blood,  
Then, of Ulysses to his home return'd 355

Let none hear news from thee, no, not my sire  
Laertes, nor Eumæus, nor of all

The menials any, or even Penelope,  
That thou and I, alone, may search the drift  
Of our domestic women, and may prove 360  
Our serving-men, who honours and reveres  
And who contemns us both, but chiefly thee  
So gracious, and so worthy to be loved.

Him then thus answer'd his illustrious son.

Trust me, my father! thou shalt soon be taught 365  
That I am not of drowsy mind obtuse.

But this I think not likely to avail

Or thee or me; ponder it yet again;  
For tedious were the task, farm after farm  
To visit of those servants, proving each, 370

And the proud suitors merciless devour  
Meantime thy substance, nor abstain from aught.

Learn, if thou wilt, (and I that course myself  
Advise) who slights thee of the female train,  
And who is guiltless; but I would not try 375

From house to house the men, far better proved  
Hereafter, if in truth by signs from heaven  
Inform'd, thou hast been taught the will of Jove.

Thus they conferr'd. The gallant bark, meantime,

Reach'd Ithaca, which from the Pylion shore      380  
Had brought Telemachus with all his band.  
Within the many-fathom'd port arrived  
His lusty followers haled her far aground,  
Then carried thence their arms, but to the house  
Of Clytius the illustrious gifts convey'd.      385  
Next to the royal mansion they dispatch'd  
An herald, charged with tidings to the Queen,  
That her Telemachus had reach'd the cot  
Of good Eumæus, and the bark had sent  
Home to the city ; lest the matchless dame      390  
Should still deplore the absence of her son.  
They then, the herald and the swine-herd, each  
Bearing like message to his mistress, met,  
And at the palace of the godlike Chief  
Arriving, compass'd by the female throng      395  
Inquisitive, the herald thus began.

Thy son, O Queen ! is safe ; even now return'd.  
Then, drawing nigh to her, Eumæus told  
His message also from her son received,  
And, his commission punctually discharged,      400  
Leaving the palace, sought his home again.

Grief seized and anguish, at those tidings, all  
The suitors ; issuing forth, on the outside  
Of the high wall they sat, before the gate,  
When Polybus' son, Eurymachus, began.      405

My friends ! his arduous task, this voyage, deem'd  
By us impossible, in our despatch  
Telemachus hath achieved. Haste ! launch we forth  
A sable bark, our best, which let us man

With mariners expert, who, rowing forth      410  
Swiftly, shall summon our companions home.

Scarce had he said, when turning where he sat,  
Amphinomus beheld a bark arrived  
Just then in port; he saw them furling sail,  
And seated with their oars in hand; he laugh'd      415  
Through pleasure at that sight, and thus he spake.

Our message may be spared. Lo! they arrive.  
Either some God inform'd them, or they saw,  
Themselves, the vessel of Telemachus  
Too swiftly passing to be reach'd by theirs.      420

He spake; they, rising, hasted to the shore.  
Alert they drew the sable bark aground,  
And by his servant each his arms dispatch'd  
To his own home. Then all to council close  
Assembling, neither elder of the land      425  
Nor youth allow'd to join them, and the rest  
Eupithes' son, Antinoüs, thus bespake.

Ah! how the Gods have rescued him! all day  
Perch'd on the airy mountain-top, our spies  
Successive watch'd; and when the sun declined,      430  
We never slept on shore, but all night long  
Till sacred dawn arose, plow'd the abyss,  
Hoping Telemachus, that we might seize  
And slay him, whom some Deity hath led,  
In our despight, safe to his home again.      435  
But frame we yet again means to destroy  
Telemachus; ah—let not Him escape!  
For end of this our task, while he survives,  
None shall be found, such prudence he displays  
And wisdom; neither are the people now      440

Unanimous our friends as heretofore.  
 Come, then—prevent him, ere he call the Greeks  
 To council; for he will not long delay,  
 But will be angry, doubtless, and will tell  
 Amid them all, how we in vain devised 445  
 His death, a deed which they will scarce applaud,  
 But will, perhaps, punish and drive us forth  
 From our own country to a distant land.—  
 Prevent him, therefore, quickly; in the field  
 Slay him, or on the road; so shall his wealth 450  
 And his possessions on ourselves devolve,  
 Which we will share equally, but his house  
 Shall be the Queen's, and his whom she shall wed.  
 Yet, if not so inclined, ye rather chuse  
 That he should live and occupy entire 455  
 His patrimony, then, no longer, here  
 Assembled, let us revel at his cost,  
 But let us all with spousal gifts produced  
 From our respective treasures, woo the Queen,  
 Leaving her in full freedom to espouse 460  
 Who proffers most, and whom the fates ordain.

He ceased; the assembly silent sat and mute.  
 Then rose Amphinomus amid them all,  
 Offspring renown'd of Nisus, son himself  
 Of King Aretias. He had thither led 465  
 The suitor train who from the pleasant isle  
 Corn-clad of green Dulichium had arrived,  
 And by his speech pleased far beyond them all  
 Penelope, for he was just and wise,  
 And thus, well-counselling the rest, began. 470

Not I, my friends! far be the thought from me

To slay Telemachus ! it were a deed  
Momentous, terrible, to slay a prince.  
First, therefore, let us counsel ask of heaven,  
And if Jove's oracle that course approve, 475  
I will encourage you, and will myself  
Be active in his death ; but if the Gods  
Forbid it, then, by my advice, forbear.

So spake Amphinomus, whom all approved.  
Arising then, into Ulysses' house 480  
They went, where each his splendid seat resumed.

A novel purpose occupied, meantime,  
Penelope ; she purposed to appear  
Before her suitors, whose design to slay  
Telemachus she had from Medon learn'd, 485  
The herald, for his ear had caught the sound.  
Toward the hall with her attendant train  
She moved, and when, most graceful of her sex,  
Where sat the suitors she arrived, between  
The columns standing of the stately dome, 490  
And covering with her white veil's lucid folds  
Her features, to Antinoüs thus she spake.

Antinoüs, proud, contentious, evermore  
To mischief prone ! the people deem thee wise  
Past thy compeers, and in all grace of speech 495  
Preeminent, but such wast never thou.  
Inhuman ! why is it thy dark design  
To slay Telemachus ? and why with scorn  
Rejectest thou the suppliant's <sup>1</sup> prayer, which Jove

<sup>1</sup> Alluding probably to entreaties made to him at some former time by herself and Telemachus, that he would not harm them. Clarke.



Himself hath witness'd ? Plots please not the Gods.  
Know'st not that thy own father refuge found 501  
Here, when he fled before the people's wrath  
Whom he had irritated by a wrong  
Which, with a band of Taphian robbers join'd,  
He offered to the 'Thesprots, our allies ? 505  
They would have torn his heart, and would have laid  
All his delights and his possessions waste,  
But my Ulysses slaked the furious heat  
Of their revenge, whom thou requitest now  
Wasting his goods, soliciting his wife, 510  
Slaying his son, and filling me with woe.  
But cease, I charge thee, and bid cease the rest.

To whom the son of Polybus replied,  
Eurymachus.—Icarius' daughter wise !  
Take courage, fair Penelope, and chace 515  
These fears unreasonable from thy mind !  
The man lives not, nor shall, who while I live,  
And faculty of sight retain, shall harm  
Telemachus, thy son. For thus I say,  
And thus will I perform ; his blood shall stream 520  
A sable current from my lance's point  
That moment ; for the city-waster Chief  
Ulysses, oft, me placing on his knees,  
Hath fill'd my infant grasp with savoury food,  
And given me ruddy wine. I, therefore, hold 525  
Telemachus of all men most my friend,  
Nor hath he death to fear from hand of ours.  
Yet, if the Gods shall doom him, die he must.

So he encouraged her, who yet, himself,  
Plotted his death. She, re-ascending, sought 530

Her stately chamber, and, arriving there,  
Deplored with tears her long-regretted Lord  
Till Athenæan Pallas azure-eyed  
Dews of soft slumber o'er her lids diffused.

And now, at even-tide, Eumæus reach'd 535  
Ulysses and his son. A yearling swine  
Just slain they skilfully for food prepared,  
When Pallas, drawing nigh, smote with her wand  
Ulysses, at the stroke rendering him old,  
And his apparel sordid as before, 540  
Lest, knowing him, the swain at once should seek  
Penelope, and let the secret forth.

Then foremost him Telemachus address'd.  
Noble Eumæus! thou art come; what news  
Bring'st from the city? Have the warrior band 545  
Of suitors, hopeless of their ambush, reach'd  
The port again, or wait they still for me?

To whom Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
No time for such enquiry, nor to range,  
Curious, the streets had I, but anxious wish'd 550  
To make my message known, and to return.  
But, as it chanced, a nimble herald sent  
From thy companions, met me on the way,  
Who reach'd thy mother first. Yet this I know,  
For this I saw. Passing above the town 555  
Where they have piled a way-side hill of stones  
To Mercury, I beheld a gallant bark  
Entering the port; a bark she was of ours,  
The crew were numerous, and I mark'd her deep-  
Laden with shields and spears of double edge. 560  
Theirs I conjectured her, and could no more.

He spake, and, by Eumæus unperceived,  
Telemachus his father eyed and smiled.  
Their task accomplish'd, and the table spread,  
They ate, nor any his due portion miss'd,  
And hunger now and thirst both sated, all  
To rest repair'd, and took the gift of sleep.

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# THE ODYSSEY.

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BOOK XVII.

#### ARGUMENT OF THE SEVENTEENTH BOOK.

Telemachus returns to the city, and relates to his mother the principal passages of his voyage; Ulysses, conducted by Eumæus, arrives there also, and enters among the suitors, having been known only by his old dog Argus, who dies at his feet. The curiosity of Penelope being excited by the account which Eumæus gives her of Ulysses, she orders him immediately into her presence, but Ulysses postpones the interview till evening, when the suitors having left the palace, there shall be no danger of interruption. Eumæus returns to his cottage.

# THE ODYSSEY.

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## BOOK XVII.

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Now look'd Aurora from the East abroad,  
When the illustrious offspring of divine  
Ulysses bound his sandals to his feet ;  
He seized his sturdy spear match'd to his gripe,  
And to the city meditating quick 5  
Departure now, the swine-herd thus bespake.

Father ! I seek the city, to convince  
My mother of my safe return, whose tears,  
I judge, and lamentations shall not cease  
Till her own eyes behold me. But I lay 10  
On thee this charge. Into the city lead,  
Thyself, this hapless guest, that he may beg  
Provision there, a morsel and a drop  
From such as may, perchance, vouchsafe the boon.  
I cannot, vext and harrass'd as I am, 15  
Feed all, and should the stranger take offence,  
The worse for him. Plain truth is my delight.

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied.  
Nor is it my desire to be detained.  
Better the mendicant in cities seeks 20

His dole, vouchsafe it whosoever may,  
Than in the villages. I am not young,  
Nor longer of an age that well accords  
With rural tasks, nor could I all perform  
That it might please a master to command. 25  
Go then, and when I shall have warm'd my limbs  
Before the hearth, and when the risen sun  
Shall somewhat chase the cold, thy servant's task  
Shall be to guide me thither, as thou bidd'st.  
For this is a vile garb ; the frosty air 30  
Of morning will benumb me thus attired,  
And, as ye say, the city is remote.

He ended, and Telemachus in haste  
Set forth, his thoughts all teeming as he went,  
With dire revenge. Soon in the palace-courts 35  
Arriving, he reclined his spear against  
A column and proceeded to the hall.  
Him Euryclea, first, his nurse perceived,  
While on the variegated seats she spread  
Their fleecy covering ; swift with tearful eyes 40  
She flew to him, and the whole female train  
Of brave Ulysses swarm'd around his son,  
Clasping him, and his forehead and his neck  
Kissing affectionate ; then came herself,  
A golden Venus or Diana fair, 45  
Forth from her chamber to her son's embrace,  
The chaste Penelope ; with tears she threw  
Her arms around him, his bright-beaming eyes  
And forehead kiss'd, and with a murmur'd plaint  
Maternal in wing'd accents thus began. 50

Thou hast return'd, light of my eyes ! my son !  
My loved Telemachus ! I had no hope  
To see thee more when once thou hadst embark'd  
For Pylus, privily, and with no consent  
From me obtain'd, news seeking of thy sire. 55  
But haste ; unfold. Declare what thou hast seen.

To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
Ah mother ! let my sorrows rest, nor me  
From death so lately 'scaped afflict anew,  
But, bathed and habited in fresh attire, 60  
With all the maidens of thy train ascend  
To thy superior chamber, there to vow  
A perfect hecatomb to all the Gods,  
When Jove shall have avenged our numerous wrongs.  
I seek the forum, there to introduce 65  
A guest, my follower from the Pylian shore,  
Whom sending forward with my noble band,  
I bade Piræus to his own abode  
Lead him, and with all kindness entertain  
The stranger, till I should myself arrive. 70

He spake, nor flew his words useless away.  
She, bathed and habited in fresh attire,  
Vow'd a full hecatomb to all the Gods,  
Would Jove but recompense her numerous wrongs.  
Then, spear in hand, went forth her son, two dogs  
Fleet-footed following him. O'er all his form  
Pallas diffused a dignity divine,  
And every eye gazed on him as he pass'd.  
The suitors throng'd him round, joy on their lips  
And welcome, but deep mischief in their hearts. 80



He, shunning all that crowd, chose to himself  
 A seat, where Mentor sat, and Antiphus,  
 And Ialytherses, long his father's friends  
 Sincere, who of his voyage much enquired.  
 Then drew Piræus nigh, leading his guest 85  
 Toward the forum ; nor Telemachus  
 Stood long aloof, but greeted his approach,  
 And was accosted by Piræus thus.

Sir ! send thy menial women to bring home  
 The precious charge committed to my care, 90  
 Thy gifts at Menelaus' hands received.

To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
 Piræus ! wait ; for I not yet foresee  
 The upshot. Should these haughty ones effect  
 My death, clandestine, under my own roof, 95  
 And parcel my inheritance by lot,  
 I rather wish those treasures thine, than theirs.  
 But should I with success plan for them all  
 A bloody death, then, wing'd with joy, thyself  
 Bring home those presents to thy joyful friend. 100

So saying, he led the anxious stranger thence  
 Into the royal mansion, where arrived,  
 Each cast his mantle on a couch or throne,  
 And plunged his feet into a polish'd bath.  
 There wash'd and lubricated with smooth oils, 105  
 From the attendant maidens each received  
 Tunic and shaggy mantle. Thus attired,  
 Forth from the baths they stepp'd, and sat again.  
 A maiden, next, with golden ewer charged,  
 And silver bowl, pour'd water on their hands, 110

And spread the polish'd table, which with food  
Of all kinds, remnants of the last regale,  
The mistress of the household charge supplied.  
Meantime, beside a column of the dome  
His mother, on a couch reclining, twirl'd 115  
Her slender threads. They to the furnish'd board  
Stretch'd forth their hands, and hunger now and thirst  
Both satisfied, Penelope began.

Telemachus ! I will ascend again,  
And will repose me on my woeful bed ; 120  
For such it hath been, and with tears of mine  
Ceaseless bedew'd, e'er since Ulysses went  
With Atreus' sons to Troy. For not a word  
Thou would'st vouchsafe me till our haughty guests  
Had occupied the house again, of all 125  
That thou hast heard (if aught indeed thou hast,)  
Of thy long-absent father's wish'd return.

Her answer'd then Telemachus discrete.  
Mother ! at thy request I will with truth  
Relate the whole. At Pylus' shore arrived 130  
We Nestor found, chief of the Pylian race.  
Receiving me in his august abode,  
He entertain'd me with such welcome kind  
As a glad father shews to his own son  
Long-lost and newly found ; so Nestor me, 135  
And his illustrious offspring, entertain'd,  
But yet assured me that he nought had heard  
From mortal lips of my magnanimous sire,  
Whether alive or dead ; with his own steeds  
He sent me, and with splendid chariot thence 140

To spear-famed Menelaus, Atreus' son.  
There saw I Helen, by the Gods' decree  
Authoress of trouble both to Greece and Troy.  
The Hero Menelaus then enquired  
What cause had urged me to the pleasant vale 145  
Of Lacedæmon; plainly I rehearsed  
The occasion, and the Hero thus replied.

Ye Gods! they are ambitious of the bed  
Of a brave man, however base themselves.  
But, as it chances when the hart hath laid 150  
Her fawns new-yea'd and sucklings yet, to rest  
In some resistless lion's den, she roams  
Meantime the hills, and in the grassy vales  
Feeds heedless, but the lion to his lair  
Returning soon, both her and hers destroys, 155  
So shall thy father, brave Ulysses, them.  
Jove! Pallas! and Apollo! oh that such  
As erst in well-built Lesbos, where he strove  
With Philomelides, whom wrestling, flat  
He threw, when all Achaia's sons rejoiced, 160  
Ulysses now might mingle with his foes!  
Short life and bitter nuptials should be theirs.  
But thy inquiries neither indirect  
Will I evade, nor give thee false reply,  
But all that from the Ancient<sup>1</sup> of the Deep 165  
I have received will utter, hiding nought.  
The God declared that he had seen thy sire  
In a lone island, sorrowing, and detain'd

<sup>1</sup> Proteus.

An inmate in the grotto of the nymph  
Calypso, wanting also means by which 170  
To reach the country of his birth again,  
For neither gallant barks nor friends had he  
To speed his passage o'er the boundless waves.

So Menelaüs spake, the spear-renown'd.  
My errand thus accomplish'd, I return'd,— 175  
And by the Gods with gales propitious blest,  
Was wafted swiftly to my native shore.

He spake, and tumult in his mother's heart  
So speaking, raised. Consolatory, next,  
The godlike Theoclymenus began. 180

Consort revered of Laertiades !  
Little the Spartan knew, but list to me,  
For I will plainly prophesy and sure.  
Be Jove of all in heaven my witness first,  
Then, this thy hospitable board, and, last, 185  
The household Gods of the illustrious Chief  
Ulysses, at whose hearth<sup>2</sup> I have arrived,  
That, even now, within his native isle  
Ulysses somewhere sits, or creeps obscure,  
Witness of these enormities, and seeds 190  
Sowing of dire destruction for his foes ;  
So sure an augury, while on the deck  
Reclining of the gallant bark, I saw,  
And with loud voice proclaim'd it to thy son.

Him answer'd then Penelope discrete. 195  
Grant heaven, my guest, that this good word of thine

<sup>2</sup> The hearth was the altar on which the lares or household  
ods were worshipped.

Fail not ! then shalt thou soon such bounty share  
And friendship at my hands, that at first sight  
Whoe'er shall meet thee shall pronounce thee blest. .

Thus they conferr'd. Meantime the suitors hurl'd  
The quoit and lance on the smooth area spread 201  
Before Ulysses' gate, the custom'd scene  
Of their contentions, sports, and clamours rude.  
But when the hour of supper now approach'd,  
And from the pastures on all sides the sheep 205  
Came with their wonted drivers, Medon then  
(For he of all the heralds pleased them most,  
And waited at the board) them thus address'd.

Enough of play, young princes ! entering now  
The house, prepare we sedulous our feast, 210  
Since in well-timed refreshment harm is none.

He spake, whose admonition pleased. At once  
All rising sought the palace ; there arrived,  
Each cast his mantle off, which on his throne  
Or couch he spread, then brisk to slaughter fell 215  
Of many a victim ; sheep and goats and brawns  
They slew, all fatted, and a pastured ox,  
Hastening the banquet ; nor with less dispatch  
Ulysses and Eumæus now prepared  
To seek the town, when thus the swain began. 220

My guest ! since thy fixt purpose is to seek  
This day the city as my master bade,  
Though I, in truth, much rather wish thee here  
A keeper of our herds, yet through respect  
And reverence of his orders, whose reproof 225  
I dread, for masters seldom gently chide,

I would be gone. Arise, let us depart,  
For day already is far-spent, and soon  
The air of even-tide will chill thee more.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied. 230

It is enough. I understand. Thou speak'st  
To one intelligent. Let us depart,  
And lead, thyself, the way ; but give me, first,  
(If thou have one already hewn,) a staff  
To lean on, for ye have describ'd the road 235  
Rugged, and oftentimes dangerous to the foot.

So saying, his tatter'd wallet o'er his back  
He cast, suspended by a leathern twist,  
Eumæus gratified him with a staff,  
And forth they went, leaving the cottage kept 240  
By dogs and swains. He city-ward his King  
Led on, in form a squalid beggar old,  
Halting, and in unseemly garb attired.

But when, slow-travelling the craggy way,  
They now approach'd the town, and had attain'd 245  
The marble fountain deep, which with its streams  
Pellucid all the citizens supplied,  
(Ithacus had that fountain framed of old  
With Neritus and Polyctor, over which  
A grove of water-nourish'd alders hung 250  
Circular on all sides, while cold the rill  
Ran from the rock, on whose tall summit stood  
The altar of the nymphs, by all who pass'd  
With sacrifice frequented, still, and prayer ;)  
Melanthius, son of Dolius, at that fount 255  
Met them ; the chosen goats of every flock,

With two assistants, from the field he drove,  
The suitors' supper. He, seeing them both,  
In surly accent boorish, such as fired  
Ulysses with resentment, thus began. 260

Ay—this is well—the villain leads the vile ;—  
Thus evermore the Gods join like to like.  
Thou clumsy swine-herd, whither would'st conduct  
This morsel-hunting mendicant obscene,  
Defiler base of banquets? many a post 265  
Shall he rub smooth that props him while he begs  
Lean alms, sole object of his low pursuit,  
Who ne'er to sword or tripod yet aspired.  
Would'st thou afford him to me for a guard  
Or sweeper of my stalls, or to supply 270  
My kids with leaves, he should on bulkier thewes  
Supported stand, though nourish'd but with whey.  
But no such useful arts hath he acquired,  
Nor likes he work, but rather much to extort  
From others food for his unsated maw. 275  
But mark my prophesy, for it is true,  
At famed Ulysses' house should he arrive,  
His sides shall shatter many a footstool hurl'd  
Against them by the offended princes there.

He spake, and drawing nigh, with his raised foot,  
Insolent as he was and brutish, smote 281  
Ulysses' haunch, yet shook not from his path  
The firm-set Chief, who doubtful mused awhile  
Whether to rush on him, and with his staff  
To slay him, or uplifting him on high, 285  
Downward to dash him headlong; but his wrath

Restraining, calm he suffer'd the affront.  
Him then Eumæus with indignant look  
Rebuking, raised his hands, and fervent pray'd.

Nymphs of the fountains, progeny of Jove ! 290  
If e'er Ulysses on your altar burn'd

The thighs of fatted lambs or kidlings, grant  
This my request. O let the Hero soon,  
Conducted by some Deity, return !

So shall he quell that arrogance which safe 295  
Thou now indulgest, roaming day by day  
The city, while bad shepherds mar the flocks.

To whom the goat-herd answer thus return'd  
Melanthius. Marvellous ! how rare a speech  
The subtle cur hath framed ! whom I will send 300

Far hence at a convenient time on board  
My bark, and sell him at no little gain.

I would, that he who bears the silver bow  
As sure might pierce Telemachus this day  
•In his own house, or that the suitors might, 305  
As that same wanderer shall return no more !

He said, and them left pacing slow along,  
But soon, himself, at his Lord's house arrived ;  
There entering bold, he with the suitors sat  
Opposite to Eurymachus, for him 310

He valued most. The sewers his portion placed  
Of meat before him, and the maiden, chief  
Directress of the household, gave him bread.  
And now, Ulysses, with the swain his friend  
Approach'd, when, hearing the harmonious lyre, 315  
Both stood, for Phemius had begun his song.

He grasp'd the swine-herd's hand, and thus he said.



This house, Eumæus ! of Ulysses seems  
Passing magnificent, and to be known  
With ease for his among a thousand more. 320  
One pile supports another, and a wall  
Crested with battlements surrounds the court ;  
Firm too the folding doors all force of man  
Defy ; but numerous guests, as I perceive,  
Now feast within ; witness the savoury steam 325  
Fast-fuming upward, and the sounding harp,  
Divine associate of the festive board.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
Thou hast well guess'd ; no wonder ; thou art quick  
On every theme ; but let us well forecast 330  
This business. Wilt thou, entering first thyself  
The splendid mansion, with the suitors mix,  
Me leaving here ? or shall I lead the way  
While thou remain'st behind ? yet linger not,  
Lest seeing thee without, some servant strike 335  
Or drive thee hence. Consider which were best. .

Him answer'd then the patient Hero bold.  
It is enough. I understand. Thou speak'st  
To one intelligent. Lead thou the way  
Me leaving here, for neither stripes nor blows 340  
To me are strange. Much exercised with pain  
In fight and on the Deep, I have long since  
Learn'd patience. Follow next what follow may !  
But to suppress the appetite, I deem  
Impossible ; the stomach is a source 345  
Of ills to man, an avaricious gulf  
Destructive, which to satiate, ships are rigg'd,  
Seas traversed, and fierce battles waged remote.

Thus they discoursing stood ; Argus the while,  
Ulysses' dog, uplifted where he lay 350  
His head and ears erect. Ulysses him  
Had bred long since himself, but rarely used,  
Departing first to Ilium. Him the youths  
In other days led frequent to the chace  
Of wild goat, hart, and hare ; but now he lodged 355  
A poor old cast-off, of his Lord forlorn,  
Where mules and oxen had before the gate  
Much ordure left, with which Ulysses' hinds  
Should, in due time, manure his spacious fields.  
There lay, with dog-devouring vermin foul 360  
All over, Argus ; soon as he perceived  
Long-lost Ulysses nigh, down fell his ears  
Clapp'd close, and with his tail glad sign he gave  
Of gratulation, impotent to rise  
And to approach his master as of old. 365  
Ulysses, noting him, wiped off a tear  
Unmark'd, and of Eumæus quick enquired.

I can but wonder seeing such a dog  
Thus lodged, Eumæus ! beautiful in form  
He is, past doubt, but whether he hath been 370  
As fleet as fair I know not ; rather such  
Perchance as masters sometimes keep to grace  
Their tables, nourish'd more for show than use.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
He is the dog of one dead far remote. 375  
But had he now such feat-performing strength  
As when Ulysses left him going hence  
To Ilium, in one moment thou shouldst mark,

Astonish'd his agility and force.

He never in the sylvan deep recess 380

The wild beast saw that 'scaped him, and he track'd

Their steps infallible; but he hath now

No comfort, for (the master dead 'afar,)

The heedless servants care not for his dog.

Domestics, missing once their Lord's controul, 385

Grow wilful, and refuse their proper tasks;

For whom Jove dooms to servitude, he takes

At once the half of that man's worth away.

He said, and, entering at the portal, join'd

The suitors. Then his destiny released 390

Old Argus, soon as he had lived to see

Ulysses in the twentieth year restored.

Godlike Telemachus, long ere the rest,

Marking the swine-herd's entrance, with a nod

Summon'd him to approach. Eumæus cast 395

His eye around, and seeing vacant there

The seat which the dispenser of the feast

Was wont to occupy while he supplied

The numerous guests, planted it right before

Telemachus, and at his table sat, 400

On which the herald placed for him his share

Of meat, and from the baskets gave him bread.

Soon after *him*, Ulysses enter'd slow

The palace, like a squalid beggar old,

Staff-propp'd, and in loose tatters foul attired. 405

Within the portal on the ashen sill

He sat, and seeming languid, lean'd against

A cypress pillar by the builder's art

Polish'd long since, and planted at the door.  
Then took Telemachus a loaf entire 410  
Forth from the elegant basket, and of flesh  
A portion large as his two hands contain'd,  
And beck'ning close the swine-herd, charged him thus.

These to the stranger; whom advise to ask  
Some dole from every suitor; bashful fear 415  
Ill suits the mendicant by want oppress'd.

He spake; Eumæus went, and where he sat  
Arriving, in wing'd accents thus began.

Telemachus, oh stranger, sends thee these,  
And counsels thee to importune for more 420  
The suitors, one by one; for bashful fear  
Ill suits the mendicant by want oppress'd.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied.  
Jove, King of all, grant every good on earth  
To kind Telemachus, and the complete 425  
Accomplishment of all that he desires!

He said, and with both hands outspread, the mess  
Receiving as he sat, on his worn bag  
Disposed it at his feet. Long as the bard  
Chaunted, he ate, and when he ceased to eat, 430  
Then also ceased the bard divine to sing.  
And now ensued loud clamour in the hall  
And tumult, when Minerva, drawing nigh  
To Laertiades, impell'd the Chief  
Crusts to collect, or any pittance small 435  
At every suitor's hand, for trial's sake  
Of just and unjust; yet deliverance none  
From evil she design'd for any there.

From left to right<sup>3</sup> his progress he began  
 Petitioning, with outstretch'd hands, the throng, 440  
 As one familiar with the beggar's art.

They pitying gave to him, but view'd him still  
 With wonder, and enquiries mutual made  
 Who, and whence was he? Then the goat-herd rose  
 Melanthius, and the assembly thus address'd. 445

Hear me, ye suitors of the illustrious Queen!  
 This guest, of whom ye ask, I have beheld  
 Elsewhere; the swine-herd brought him; but himself  
 I know not, neither who nor whence he is.

So he; then thus Antinoüs stern rebuked 450  
 The swine-herd. Ah, notorious as thou art,  
 Why hast thou shewn this vagabond the way  
 Into the city? are we not enough  
 Infested with these troublers of our feasts?  
 Deem'st it a trifle that such numbers eat 455  
 At thy Lord's cost, and hast thou, therefore, led  
 This fellow hither, found we know not where?

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
 Antinoüs! though of high degree, thou speak'st  
 Not wisely. What man to another's house 460  
 Repairs to invite him to a feast, unless  
 He be of those who by profession serve  
 The public, prophet, healer of disease,  
 Ingenious artist, or some bard divine  
 Whose music may exhilarate the guests? 465  
 These, and such only, are in every land

<sup>3</sup> That he might begin auspiciously. Wine was served in the same direction. F.

Call'd to the banquet ; none invites the poor,  
Who much consume, and no requital yield.  
But thou of all the suitors roughly treat'st  
Ulysses' servants most, and chiefly me ; 470  
Yet thee I heed not, while the virtuous Queen  
Dwells in this palace, and her godlike son.

To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
Peace ! answer not verbose a man like him.  
Antinoüs hath a tongue accustom'd much 475  
To tauntings, and promotes them in the rest.

Then, turning to Antinoüs, quick he said—  
Antinoüs ! as a father for his son  
Takes thought, so thou for me, who bidd'st me chase  
The stranger harshly hence ; but God<sup>4</sup> forbid ! 480  
Impart to him. I grudge not, but myself  
Exhort thee to it ; neither, in this cause,  
Fear thou the Queen, or in the least regard  
Whatever menial throughout all the house  
Of famed Ulysses. Ah ! within thy breast 485  
Dwells no such thought ; thou lovest not to impart  
To others, but to gratify thyself.

To whom Antinoüs answer thus return'd.  
High-soaring and intemperate in thy speech  
How hast thou said, Telemachus ? Would all 490  
As much bestow on him, he should not seek  
Admittance here again three months to come.

So saying, he seized the stool which, banquetting,  
He press'd with his nice feet, and from beneath

<sup>4</sup> Here again *Θεός* occurs in the abstract.

The table forth advanced it into view. 495  
The rest all gave to him, with bread and flesh  
Filling his wallet, and Ulysses, now,  
Returning to his threshold, there to taste  
The bounty of the Greeks, paused in his way  
Beside Antinoüs, whom he thus address'd. 500

Kind sir, vouchsafe to me ! for thou appear'st  
Not least, but greatest of the Achaians here,  
And hast a kingly look. It might become  
Thee therefore above others to bestow,  
So should I praise thee wheresoe'er I roam. 505  
I also lived the happy owner once  
Of such a stately mansion, and have given  
To numerous wanderers (whencesoe'er they came)  
All that they needed ; I was also served  
By many, and enjoy'd all that denotes 510  
The envied owner opulent and blest.  
But Jove (for so it pleased him) hath reduced  
My all to nothing, prompting me, in league  
With rovers of the Deep, to sail afar  
To Ægypt, for my sure destruction there. 515  
Within the Ægyptian stream my barks well oar'd  
I station'd, and, enjoining strict my friends  
To watch them close-attendant at their side,  
Commanded spies into the hill-tops ; but they,  
Under the impulse of a spirit rash 520  
And hot for quarrel, the well-cultured fields  
Pillaged of the Ægyptians, captive led  
Their wives and little-ones, and slew the men.  
Ere long, the loud alarm their city reach'd.

Down came the citizens, by dawn of day, 525  
With horse and foot and with the gleam of arms  
Filling the plain. Then Jove with panic dread  
Struck all my people ; none found courage more  
To stand, for mischiefs swarm'd on every side.  
There, numerous by the glittering spear we fell 530  
Slaughter'd, while others they conducted thence  
Alive to servitude ; but me they gave  
To Dinetor, King in Cyprus, Jasus' son ;  
He entertain'd me liberally, and thence  
This land I reach'd, but poor and woe-begone. 535

Then answer thus Antinoüs harsh return'd.  
What dæmon introduced this nuisance here,  
This troubler of our feast ? stand yonder, keep  
Due distance from my table, or expect  
To see an Ægypt and a Cyprus worse 540  
Than those, bold mendicant and void of shame !  
Thou hauntest each, and inconsiderate each  
Gives to thee, because gifts at others cost  
Are cheap, and, plentifully served themselves,  
They squander, heedless, viands not their own. 545

To whom Ulysses while he slow retired.  
Gods ! how illiberal with that specious form !  
Thou wouldst not grant the poor a grain of salt  
From thy own board, who at another's fed  
So nobly, canst not spare a crust to me. 550

He spake ; then rag'd Antinoüs still the more,  
And in wing'd accents, louting, thus replied.

Take such dismissal now as thou deservest,  
Opprobrious ! hast thou dar'd to scoff at me ?



So saying, he seized his stool, and on the joint 555  
 Of his right shoulder smote him; firm as rock  
 He stood, by no such force to be displaced,  
 But silent shook his brows, and dreadful deeds  
 Of vengeance ruminating, sought again  
 His seat the threshold, where his bag full-charged 560  
 He grounded, and the suitors thus address'd.

Hear now, ye suitors of the matchless Queen,  
 My bosom's dictates. Trivial is the harm,  
 Scarce felt, if, fighting for his own, his sheep  
 Perchance, or beeves, a man receive a blow. 565  
 But me Antinoüs struck for that I ask'd  
 Food from him merely to appease the pangs  
 Of hunger, source of numerous ills to man.  
 If then the poor man have a God to avenge  
 His wrongs, I pray to him that death may seize 570  
 Antinoüs, ere his nuptial hour arrive!

To whom Antinoüs answer thus return'd,  
 Son of Eupithes. Either seated there  
 Or going hence, eat, stranger, and be still;  
 Lest for thy insolence, by hand or foot 575  
 We drag thee forth, and thou be flay'd alive.

He ceased, whom all indignant heard, and thus  
 Even his own proud companions censured him.

Antinoüs! thou didst not well to smite  
 The wretched vagabond. O thou art doom'd 580  
 For ever, if there be a God in heaven<sup>5</sup>;

<sup>5</sup> Εἰ δὲ πᾶσι τοῖς ἐπὶ τῷ θεῷ ἐστὶ.

Eustathius, and Clarke after him, understand an aposiopesis here, as if the speaker meant to say—what if there should be?

For in similitude of strangers oft,  
The Gods, who can with ease all shapes assume,  
Repair to populous cities, where they mark  
The outrageous and the righteous deeds of men. 585

So they, for whose reproof he little cared.  
But in his heart Telemachus that blow  
Resented, anguish-torn, yet not a tear  
He shed, but silent shook his brows, and mused  
Terrible things. Penelope, meantime, 590  
Told of the wanderer so abused beneath  
Her roof, among her maidens thus exclaim'd.

So may Apollo, glorious archer, smite  
Thee also! Then Eurynome replied,  
Oh might our prayers prevail, none of them all 595  
Should see bright-charioted Aurora more.

Her answer'd then Penelope discrete.  
Nurse! they are odious all, for that alike  
All teem with mischief! but Antinoüs' looks  
Remind me ever of the gloom of death. 600  
A stranger hath arrived who, begging, roams  
The house, (for so his penury enjoins)  
The rest have given him, and have fill'd his bag  
With viands, but Antinoüs hath bruised  
His shoulder with a foot-stool hurl'd at him. 605

While thus the Queen conversing with her train  
In her own chamber sat, Ulysses made

or—suppose there should be? But the sentence seems to fall  
in better with what follows interpreted as above, and it is a  
sense of the passage not unwarranted by the opinion of other  
commentators.—See Schaufelbergerus.

Plenteous repast. Then calling to her side  
Eumæus, thus she signified her will.

Eumæus, noble friend ! bid now approach 610  
Yon stranger. I would speak with him, and ask  
If he have seen Ulysses, or have heard  
Tidings, perchance, of the afflicted Chief,  
For much a wanderer by his garb he seems.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply. 615  
Were those Achaians silent, thou should'st hear,  
O Queen ! a tale that would console thy heart.  
Three nights I housed him, and within my cot  
Three days detain'd him, (for his ship he left  
A fugitive, and came direct to me,) 620  
But half untold his history still remains.

As when his eye one fixes on a bard  
From heaven instructed in such themes as charm  
The ear of mortals, ever as he sings  
The people press insatiable to hear, 625  
So, in my cottage, seated at my side,  
That stranger with his tale enchanted me.  
Laertes, he affirms, hath been his guest  
Erewhile in Crete, where Minos' race resides.  
And thence he hath arrived, after great loss, 630  
A suppliant to the very earth abased ;  
He adds, that in Thesprotia's neighbour realm  
He of Ulysses heard, both that he lives,  
And that he comes laden with riches home.

To whom Penelope, discrete, replied. 635  
Haste ; call him. I would hear myself his tale.  
Meantime, let these, or in the palace gate

Sport jocular, or here ; their hearts are light,  
For their possessions are secure ; *their* wine  
None drinks, or eats *their* viands, save their own ; 640  
While my abode, day after day, themselves  
Haunting, my beeves and sheep, and fatted goats  
Slay for the banquet, and my casks exhaust  
Extravagant, whence endless waste ensues ;  
For no such friend as was Ulysses once 645  
Have I to expel the mischief. But might he  
Revisit once his native shores again,  
Then, aided by his son, he should avenge,  
Incontinent, the wrongs which now I mourn.

Then sneezed Telemachus with sudden force, 650  
That all the palace rang ; his mother laugh'd,  
And in wing'd accents thus the swain bespake.

Haste—bid him hither—heard'st thou not the sneeze  
Propitious of my son ? oh might it prove  
A presage of inevitable death 655  
To all these revellers ! may none escape !  
Now mark me well. Should the event his tale  
Confirm, at my own hands he shall receive  
Mantle and tunic both for his reward.

She spake ; he went, and where Ulysses sat 660  
Arriving, in wing'd accents thus began.

Penelope, my venerable friend !  
Calls thee, the mother of Telemachus.  
Oppress'd by numerous troubles, she desires  
To ask thee tidings of her absent Lord. 665  
And should the event verify thy report,  
Thy meed shall be (a boon which much thou need'st)

Tunic and mantle ; but she gives no more ;  
Thy sustenance<sup>6</sup> thou must, as now, obtain,  
Begging it at their hands who chuse to give. 670

Then thus Ulysses, Hero toil-inured.

Eumæus ! readily I can relate  
Truth, and truth only, to the prudent Queen  
Icarius' daughter ; for of him I know  
Much, and have suffer'd sorrows like his own. 675

But dread I feel of this imperious throng  
Perverse, whose riot and outrageous acts  
Of violence echo through the vault of heaven.

And even now, when for no fault of mine  
Yon suitor struck me as I pass'd, and fill'd 680  
My flesh with pain, neither Telemachus  
Nor any interposed to stay his arm.

Now, therefore, let Penelope, although  
Impatient, till the sun descend postpone  
Her questions ; then she may enquire secure 685  
When comes her husband, and may nearer place  
My seat to the hearth-side, for thinly clad  
Thou know'st I am, whose aid I first implored.

He ceased ; at whose reply Eumæus sought  
Again the queen, but ere he yet had pass'd 690  
The threshold, thus she greeted his return.

Comest thou alone, Eumæus ? why delays  
The invited wanderer ? dreads he other harm ?  
Or sees he aught that with a bashful awe  
Fills him ? the bashful poor are poor indeed. 695

<sup>6</sup> This seems added by Eumæus to cut off from Ulysses the hope that might otherwise tempt him to use fiction.

To whom, Eumæus, thou didst thus reply.  
He hath well spoken ; none who would decline  
The rudeness of this contumelious throng  
Could answer otherwise ; thee he entreats  
To wait till sun-set, and that course, 'O Queen, 790  
Thou shalt thyself far more commodious find,  
To hold thy conference with the guest, alone.

Then answer thus Penelope return'd.  
The stranger, I perceive, is not unwise,  
Whoe'er he be, for on the earth are none 795  
Proud, insolent, and profligate as these.

So spake the Queen. Then (all his message told)  
The good Eumæus to the suitors went  
Again, and with his head inclined toward  
Telemachus, lest others should his words 710  
Witness, in accents wing'd him thus address'd.

Friend and kind master ! I return to keep  
My herds, and to attend my rural charge,  
Whence we are both sustain'd. Keep thou, meantime,  
All here with vigilance, but chiefly watch 715  
For thy own good, and save *thyself* from harm ;  
For numerous here brood mischief, whom the Gods  
Exterminate, ere yet their plots prevail !

To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
So be it, father ! and (thy evening-mess 720  
Eaten) depart ; to-morrow come again,  
Bringing fair victims hither ; I will keep,  
I and the Gods, meantime, all here secure.

He ended ; then resumed once more the swain  
His polish'd seat, and both with wine and food 725

Now satiate, to his charge return'd, the court  
Leaving and all the palace throng'd with guests ;  
They (for it now was evening) all alike  
Turn'd jovial to the song and to the dance.

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# THE ODYSSEY.



BOOK XVIII.

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### ARGUMENT OF THE EIGHTEENTH BOOK.

The beggar Irus arrives at the palace; a combat takes place between him and Ulysses, in which Irus is by one blow vanquished. Penelope appears to the suitors, and having reminded them of the presents which she had a right to expect from them, receives a gift from each. Eurymachus, provoked by a speech of Ulysses, flings a footstool at him, which knocks down the cup-bearer; a general tumult is the consequence, which continues until by the advice of Telemachus, seconded by Amphinomus, the suitors retire to their respective homes.

# THE ODYSSEY.

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## BOOK XVIII.

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Now came a public mendicant, a man  
Accustom'd, seeking alms, to roam the streets  
Of Ithaca ; one never sated yet  
With food or drink ; yet muscle had he none,  
Or strength of limb, though giant-built in show.     5  
Arnæus was the name which at his birth  
His mother gave him, but the youthful band  
Of suitors, whom as messenger he served,  
All named him Irus. He, arriving, sought  
To drive Ulysses forth from his own home,     10  
And in rough accents rude him thus rebuked.

Forth from the porch, old man ! lest by the foot  
I drag thee quickly forth. Seest not how all  
Wink on me, and by signs give me command  
To drag thee hence ? nor is it aught but shame     15  
That checks me. Yet arise, lest soon with fists  
Thou force me to adjust our difference.

To whom Ulysses, lowering dark, replied.  
Peace, fellow ! neither word nor deed of mine  
Wrongs thee, nor feel I envy at the boon,     20

However plentiful, which thou receivest.  
 The sill may hold us both ; thou dost not well  
 To envy others ; thou appear'st like me  
 A vagrant ; plenty is the gift of heaven.  
 But urge me not to trial of our fists, 25  
 Lest thou provoke me, and I stain with blood  
 Thy bosom and thy lips, old as I am.  
 So, my attendance should to-morrow prove  
 More tranquil here ; for thou should'st leave I judge,  
 Ulysses' mansion, never to return. 30

Then answer'd Irus, kindling with disdain.  
 Gods ! with what volubility of speech  
 The table-hunter prates, like an old hag  
 Collied with chimney-smutch ! but ah beware !  
 For I intend thee mischief, and to dash 35  
 With both hands every grinder from thy gums,  
 As men untooth a pig pilfering the corn.  
 Come—gird thee, that all here may view the strife—  
 But how wilt thou oppose one young as I ?

Thus on the threshold of the lofty gate 40  
 They, wrangling, chafed each other, whose dispute  
 The high-born youth Antinoüs mark'd ; he laugh'd  
 Delighted, and the suitors thus address'd.

Oh friends ! no pastime ever yet occur'd  
 Pleasant as this which, now, the Gods themselves 45  
 Afford us. Irus and the stranger brawl  
 As they would box. Haste—let us urge them on.

He said ; at once loud-laughing all arose ;  
 The ill-clad disputants they round about  
 Encompass'd, and Antinoüs thus began. 50

Attend, ye noble suitors, to my voice.  
 Two paunches lie of goats here on the fire,  
 Which fill'd with fat and blood we set apart  
 For supper; he who conquers, and in force  
 Superior proves, shall freely take the paunch 55  
 Which he prefers, and shall with us thenceforth  
 Feast always; neither will we here admit  
 Poor man beside to beg at our repasts.

He spake, whom all approved; next, artful Chief  
 Ulysses thus, dissembling, them address'd. 60

Princes! unequal is the strife between  
 A young man and an old with misery worn;  
 But I, always counsellor of ill,  
 Moves to fight, that many a bruise received,  
 I may be foil'd at last. Now swear ye all 65  
 A solemn oath, that none, for Irus' sake  
 Shall, interposing, smite me with his fist  
 Clandestine, forcing me to yield the prize.  
 He ceased, and, as he bade, all present swore  
 A solemn oath; then thus, amid them all 70  
 Standing, Telemachus majestic spake.

Guest! if thy courage and thy manly mind  
 Prompt thee to banish this man hence, no force  
 Fear thou beside, for who smites thee, shall find  
 Yet other foes to cope with; I am here 75  
 In the host's office, and the royal Chiefs  
 Eurymachus and Antinoüs, alike  
 Discrete, accord unanimous with me.

He ceased, whom all approved. Then, with his rags  
 Ulysses braced for decency his loins 80

Around, but gave to view his brawny thighs  
 Proportion'd fair, and stripp'd his shoulders broad,  
 His chest and arms robust ; while, at his side,  
 Dilating more the Hero's limbs and more  
 Minerva stood ; the assembly with fixt eyes 85  
 Astonish'd gazed on him, and looking full  
 On his next friend, a suitor thus remark'd.

Irus shall be in Irus found no more.  
 He hath pull'd evil on himself. What thewes  
 And what a haunch the senior's tatters hid ! 90

So he,—meantime in Irus' heart arose  
 Horrible tumult ; yet, his loins by force  
 Girding, the servants dragg'd him to the fight  
 Pale, and his flesh all quivering as he came ;  
 Whose terrors thus Antinoüs sharp rebuked. 95

Now, wherefore livest, and why wast ever born  
 Thou mountain-mass of earth ! if such dismay  
 Shake thee at thought of combat with a man  
 Ancient as he, and worn with many woes ?  
 But mark, I threaten not in vain ; should he 100  
 O'ercome thee, and in force superior prove,  
 To Echetus thou goest ; my sable bark  
 Shall waft thee to Epirus, where he reigns  
 Enemy of mankind ; of nose and ears  
 He shall despoil thee with his ruthless steel, 105  
<sup>1</sup> And tearing by the roots the parts away  
 That mark thy sex, shall cast them to the dogs.

<sup>1</sup> Tradition says that Echetus, for a love-affair, condemned his daughter to lose her eyes, and to grind iron barley-grains, while her lover was doomed to suffer what Antinoüs threatens to Irus. F.

He said; *His* limbs new terrors at that sound  
Shook under him; into the middle space  
They led him, and each raised his hands on high. 110  
Then doubtful stood Ulysses toil-inured,  
Whether to strike him lifeless to the earth  
At once, or fell him with a managed blow.  
To smite with managed force at length he chose  
As wisest, lest, betray'd by his own strength, 115  
He should be known. With elevated fists  
Both stood; him Irus on the shoulder struck,  
But he his adversary on the neck  
Pash'd close beneath his ear; he split the bones,  
And blood in sable streams ran from his mouth. 120  
With many an hideous yell he dropp'd, his teeth  
Chatter'd, and with his heels he drumm'd the ground.  
The wooers, at that sight, lifting their hands  
In glad surprise, laugh'd all their breath away.  
Then, through the vestibule, and right across 125  
The court, Ulysses dragg'd him by the foot  
Into the portico, where propping him  
Against the wall, and giving him his staff,  
In accents wing'd he bade him thus farewell.

There seated now, dogs drive and swine away, 130  
Nor claim (thysself so base) supreme control  
O'er other guests and mendicants, lest harm  
Reach thee, hereafter, heavier still than this.

So saying, his tatter'd wallet o'er his back  
He threw suspended by its leathern twist, 135  
And toward the threshold turning, sat again.

They laughing ceaseless still, the palace-door  
Re-enter'd, and him, courtcous, thus bespake.

Jove, and all Jove's assessors in the skies  
Vouchsafe thee, stranger, whatsoc'er it be, 140  
Thy heart's desire ! who hast our ears relieved  
From that insatiate beggar's irksome tone.  
Soon to Epirus he shall go, dispatch'd  
To Echetus the King, pest of mankind.

So they ; to whose propitious words the Chief 145  
Listen'd delighted. Then Antinoüs placed  
The paunch before him, and Amphinomus  
Two loaves, selected from the rest ; he fill'd  
A goblet also, drank to him, and said,

My father, hail ! O stranger, be thy lot 150  
Hereafter blest, though adverse now and hard !

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied.  
To me, Amphinomus, endued thou seem'st  
With much discretion, who art also son  
Of such a sire, whose fair report I know, 155  
Dulichian Nysus opulent and good.  
Fame speaks thee his, and thou appear'st a man  
Judicious ; hear me, therefore ; mark me well.  
Earth nourishes, of all that breathe or creep,  
No creature weak as man ; for while the Gods 160  
Grant him prosperity and health, no fear  
Hath he, or thought, that he shall ever mourn ;  
But when the Gods with evils unforeseen  
Smite him, he bears them with a grudging mind ;  
For such as the complexion of his lot 165

By the appointment of the Sire of all,  
Such is the colour of the mind of man.  
I, too, have been familiar in my day  
With wealth and ease, but I was then self-will'd,  
And many wrong'd, embolden'd by the thought 170  
Of my own father's and my brethren's power.  
Let no man, therefore, be unjust, but each  
Use modestly what gift soc'er of heaven.  
So do not these. These ever bent I see  
On deeds injurious, the possessions large 175  
Consuming, and dishonouring the wife  
Of one, who will not, as I judge, remain  
Long absent from his home, but is, perchance,  
Even at the door. Thee, therefore, may the Gods  
Steal hence in time; ah, meet not his return 180  
To his own country! for they will not part,  
(He and the suitors) without blood, I think,  
If once he enter at these gates again!  
He ended, and libation pouring, quaff'd  
The generous juice, then in the prince's hand 185  
Replaced the cup; he, pensive, and his head  
Inclining low, pass'd from him; for his heart  
Foreboded ill; yet 'scaped not even he,  
But in the snare of Pallas caught, his life  
To the heroic arm and spear resign'd 190  
Of brave Telemachus. Reaching, at length,  
The seat whence he had risen, he sat again.  
Minerva then, Goddess cœrulean-eyed,  
Prompted Icarius' daughter to appear  
Before the suitors; so to expose the more 195



Their drift iniquitous, and that herself  
 More bright than ever in her husband's eyes  
 Might shine, and in her son's. Much mirth she feign'd<sup>2</sup>,  
 And bursting into laughter, thus began.

I wish, Eurynome ! (who never felt 200  
 That wish till now) though I detest them all,  
 To appear before the suitors, in whose ears  
 I will admonish, for his good, my son,  
 Not to associate with that lawless crew  
 Too much, who speak him fair, but foul intend. 205

Then answer thus Eurynome return'd.  
 My daughter ! wisely hast thou said and well.  
 Go ! bathe thee and anoint thy face, then give  
 To thy dear son such counsel as thou wilt  
 Without reserve ; but show not there thy cheeks 210  
 Sullied with tears, for profit none accrues  
 From grief like thine, that never knows a change.  
 And he is now bearded, and hath attain'd  
 That age which thou wast wont with warmest prayer  
 To implore the Gods that he might live to see. 215

Her answer'd, then, Penelope discrete.  
 Persuade not me, though studious of my good,  
 To bathe, Eurynome ! or to anoint  
 My face with oil ; for all my charms the Gods  
 Inhabitants of Olympus then destroy'd 220  
 When he, embarking, left me. Go, command  
 Hippodamia and Autonoe  
 That they attend me to the hall, and wait

<sup>2</sup> This seems the sort of laughter intended by the word  
*Ἀχρεῖον*.

Beside me there ; for decency forbids  
That I should enter to the men, alone. 225

She ceased, and through the house the ancient dame  
Hasted to summon whom she had enjoin'd.

But Pallas, Goddess of the azure eyes,  
Diffused, meantime, the kindly dew of sleep  
Around Icarus' daughter ; on her couch 230  
Reclining, soon as she reclined, she dozed,  
And yielded to soft slumber all her frame.

Then, that the suitors might admire her more,  
The glorious Goddess cloathed her, as she lay,  
With beauty of the skies ; her lovely face 235

She with ambrosia purified, with such  
As Cytherea chaplet-crown'd employs  
Herself, when in the eye-ensnaring dance  
She joins the Graces ; to a statelier height  
Beneath her touch, an ampler size she grew, 240

And fairer than the elephantine bone  
Fresh from the carver's hand. These gifts conferr'd  
Divine, the awful Deity retired.

And now, loud-prattling as they came, arrived  
Her handmaids ; sleep forsook her at the sound, 245  
She wiped away a tear, and thus she said.

Me gentle sleep, sad mourner as I am,  
Hath here involved. O would that by a death  
As gentle chaste Diana would herself  
This moment set me free, that I might waste 250  
My life no longer in heart-felt regret  
Of a lamented husband's various worth  
And virtue, for in Greece no Peer had he !

She said, and through her chambers' stately door  
Issuing, descended ; neither went she sole,                   255  
But with those two fair menials of her train.

Arriving, most majestic of her sex,  
In presence of the numerous guests, beneath  
The portal of the stately dome she stood  
Between her maidens, with her lucid veil                   260  
Mantling her lovely cheeks. 'Then, every knee  
Trembled, and every heart with amorous heat  
Dissolved, her charms all coveting alike,  
While to 'Telemachus her son she spake.

Telemachus ! thou art no longer wise                   265  
As once thou wast, and even when a child.  
For thriven as thou art, and at full size  
Arrived of man, so fair-proportion'd too,  
That even a stranger, looking on thy growth  
And beauty, would pronounce thee nobly born,                   270  
Yet is thy intellect still immature.

For what is this ? why suffer'st thou a guest  
To be abused in thy own palace ? how ?  
Know'st not that if the stranger seated here  
Endure vexation, the disgrace is thine ?                   275

Her answer'd then 'Telemachus discrete.  
I blame thee not, my mother, that thou feel'st  
Thine anger moved ; yet want I not a mind  
Able to mark and to discern between  
Evil and good, child as I lately was,                   280  
Although I find not promptitude of thought  
Sufficient always, overawed and check'd  
By such a multitude, all bent alike

On mischief, of whom none takes part with me.  
 But Irus and the stranger have not fought, 285  
 Urged by the suitors, and the stranger proved  
 Victorious; yes—Heaven knows how much I wish  
 That, (in the palace some, some in the court,)  
 The suitors all sat vanquish'd, with their heads  
 Depending low, and with enfeebled limbs, 290  
 Even as that same Irus, while I speak,  
 With chin on bosom propp'd at the hall-gate  
 Sits drunkard-like, incapable to stand  
 Erect, or to regain his proper home.

So they; and now addressing to the Queen 295  
 His speech, Eurymachus thus interposed.

O daughter of Icarius! could all eyes  
 Throughout Iasian<sup>3</sup> Argos view thy charms,  
 Discrete Penelope! more suitors still  
 Assembling in thy courts would banquet here 300  
 From morn to eve; for thou surpasses far  
 In beauty, stature, worth, all womankind.

To whom replied Penelope discrete.  
 The Gods, Eurymachus! reduced to nought  
 My virtue, beauty, stature, when the Greeks, 305  
 Whom my Ulysses follow'd, sail'd to Troy.  
 Could he, returning, my domestic charge  
 Himself intend, far better would my fame  
 Be so secured, and wider far diffused.  
 But I am wretched now, such storms the Gods 310  
 Of woe have sent me. When he left his home,  
 Clasping my wrist with his right hand, he said.

<sup>3</sup> From Iäsus, once King of Peloponnesus.

My love ! for I imagine not that all  
The warrior Greeks shall safe from Troy return,  
Since fame reports the Trojans brave in fight,      315  
Skill'd in the spear, mighty to draw the bow,  
And nimble vaulters to the backs of steeds  
High-mettled, which to speediest issue bring  
The dreadful struggle of all-wasting war,—  
I know not, therefore, whether Heaven intend      320  
My safe return, or I must perish there.  
But manage thou at home. Cherish, as now,  
While I am absent, or more dearly still  
My parents, and what time our son thou seest  
Mature, then wed; wed even whom thou wilt,      325  
And hence to a new home.—Such were his words,  
All which shall full accomplishment ere long  
Receive. The day is near, when hapless I,  
Lost to all comfort by the will of Jove,  
Must meet the nuptials that my soul abhors.      330  
But this thought now afflicts me, and my mind  
Continual haunts. Such was not heretofore  
The suitors custom'd practice; all who chose  
To engage in competition for a wife  
Well-qualitied and well-endow'd, produced      335  
From their own herds and fatted flocks a feast  
For the bride's friends, and splendid presents made,  
But never ate as ye, at others' cost.

She ceased; then brave Ulysses toil-inured  
Rejoiced that, soothing them, she sought to draw      340  
From each some gift, although on other views,  
And more important far, himself intent.

Then thus Antinoüs, Eupithes' son.  
Icarius' daughter wise ! only accept  
Such gifts as we shall bring, for gifts demand 345  
That grace, nor can be decently refused ;  
But to our rural labours, or elsewhere  
Depart not we, till first thy choice be made  
Of the Achaian, chief in thy esteem.

Antinoüs spake, whose answer all approved. 350  
Then each dispatch'd his herald who should bring.  
His master's gift. Antinoüs' herald, first,  
A mantle of surpassing beauty brought,  
Wide, various, with no fewer clasps adorn'd  
Than twelve, all golden, and to every clasp 355  
Was fitted opposite its eye exact.

Next, to Eurymachus his herald bore  
A necklace of wrought gold, with amber rich  
Bestudded, every bead bright as a sun.  
Two servants for Eurydamas produced 360  
Ear-pendants fashion'd with laborious art,  
Broad, triple-gemm'd, of brilliant light profuse.  
The herald of Polyctor's son, the prince  
Pisander, brought a collar to his Lord,  
A sumptuous ornament. Each Greecian gave, 365  
And each a gift dissimilar from all.

Then, loveliest of her sex, turning away,  
She sought her chamber, whom her maidens fair  
Attended, charged with those illustrious gifts.  
Then turn'd they all to dance and pleasant song 370  
Joyous, expecting the approach of even.  
Ere long the dusky evening came, and them

Found sporting still. Then, placing in the hall  
Three hearths, that should illumine wide the house,  
They compass'd them around with fuel-wood 375  
Long-season'd and new-split, mingling the sticks  
With torches. The attendant women watch'd  
And fed those fires by turns, to whom, himself,  
Their unknown Sovereign thus his speech address'd.

Ye maidens of the long-regretted Chief 380  
Ulysses ! to the inner courts retire,  
And to your virtuous Queen, that following there  
Your several tasks, spinning and combing wool,  
Ye may amuse her ; I, meantime, for these  
Will furnish light, and should they chuse to stay 385  
'Till golden morn appear, they shall not tire  
My patience aught, for I can much endure.

He said ; they tittering on each other gazed.  
But one, Melanthe with the blooming cheeks,  
Rebuked him rudely. Dolius was her sire, 390  
But by Penelope she had been rear'd  
With care maternal, and in infant years  
Supplied with many a toy ; yet even she  
Felt not her mistress' sorrows in her heart,  
But of Eurymachus enamour'd, oft 395  
His lewd embraces met ; she, with sharp speech  
Reproachful, to Ulysses thus replied.

Why, what a brainsick vagabond art thou !  
Who neither wilt to the smith's forge retire  
For sleep, nor to the public portico, 400  
But here remaining, with audacious prate  
Disturb'st this numerous company, restrain'd

By no respect or fear ; either thou art  
With wine intoxicated, or perchance,  
Art always fool, and therefore babblest now. 405  
Say, art thou drunk with joy that thou hast foil'd  
The beggar Irus ? Tremble, lest a man  
Stronger than Irus suddenly arise,  
Who on thy temples pelting thee with blows  
Far heavier than his, shall drive thee hence 410  
With many a bruise, and foul with thy own blood.

To whom Ulysses, frowning stern, replied.  
Snarler ! Telemachus shall be inform'd  
This moment of thy eloquent harangue,  
That he may hew thee for it, limb from limb. 415

So saying, he scared the women ; back they flew  
Into the house, but each with faltering knees  
Through dread, for they believed his threats sincere.  
He then illumined by the triple blaze,  
Watch'd close the lights, busy from hearth to hearth,  
But in his soul, meantime, far other thoughts 421  
Revolved, tremendous, not conceived in vain.

Nor Pallas (that they might exasperate more  
Laertes' son) permitted to abstain  
From heart-corroding bitterness of speech 425  
Those suitors proud, of whom Eurymachus,  
Offspring of Polybus, while thus he jeer'd  
Ulysses, set the others in a roar.

Hear me, ye suitors of the illustrious Queen !  
I shall promulge my thought. This man, methinks,  
Not unconducted by the Gods, hath reach'd 431  
Ulysses' mansion, for to me the light



Of yonder torches altogether seems  
His own, an emanation from his head,  
Which not the smallest growth of hair obscures. 435

He ended ; and the city-waster Chief  
Himself accosted next. Art thou disposed  
To serve me, friend ! would I afford thee hire,  
A labourer at my farm ? thou shalt not want  
Sufficient wages ; thou may'st there collect 440  
Stones for my fences, and may'st plant my oaks,  
For which I would supply thee all the year  
With food, and cloaths, and sandals for thy feet.  
But thou hast learn'd less creditable arts,  
Nor hast a will to work, preferring much 445  
By beggary from others to extort  
Wherewith to feed thy never-sated maw.

Then answer, thus, Ulysses wise return'd.  
Forbear, Eurymachus ; for were we match'd  
In work against each other, thou and I, 450  
Mowing in spring-time, when the days are long,  
I with my well-bent sickle in my hand,  
Thou arm'd with one as keen, for trial sake  
Of our ability to toil unfed  
Till night, grass still sufficing for the proof ; 455  
Or if, again, it were our task to drive  
Yoked oxen of the noblest breed, sleek-hair'd,  
Big-limb'd, both batten'd to the full with grass,  
Their age and aptitude for work the same,  
Not soon to be fatigued, and were the field 460  
In size four acres, with a glebe through which  
The share might smoothly slide, then should'st thou see

How straight my furrow should be cut and true.  
Or should Saturnian Jove this day excite  
Here, battle, or elsewhere, and were I arm'd 465  
With two bright spears and with a shield, and bore  
A brazen casque well-fitted to my brows,  
Me then thou should'st perceive mingling in fight  
Amid the foremost Chiefs, nor with the crime  
Of idle beggary should'st upbraid me more. 470  
But thou art much a railer, one whose heart  
Pity moves not, and seem'st a mighty man  
And valiant to thyself, only because  
Thou herd'st with few, and those of little worth.  
But should Ulysses come, at his own isle 475  
Again arrived, wide as these portals are,  
To thee, at once, too narrow they should seem  
To shoot thee forth with speed enough abroad.

He ceased—then tenfold indignation fired  
Eurymachus; he furrow'd deep his brow 480  
With frowns, and in wing'd accents thus replied.

Wretch, I shall roughly handle thee anon,  
Who thus with fluent prate presumptuous darest  
Disturb this numerous company, restrain'd  
By no respect or fear. Either thou art 485  
With wine intoxicated, or, perchance,  
Art always fool, and therefore babblest now;  
Or thou art frantic haply with delight  
That thou hast foil'd yon vagabond obscure.

So saying, he seized a stool; but to the knees 490  
Ulysses flew of the Dulichian Prince  
Amphinomus, and sat, fearing incensed

Eurymachus ; he on his better hand  
 Smote full the cup-bearer ; on the hall-floor  
 Loud rang the fallen beaker, and himself 495  
 Lay on his back clamouring in the dust.  
 Strait through the dusky hall tumult ensued  
 Among the suitors, of whom thus, a youth,  
 With eyes directed to the next, exclaim'd.

Would that this rambling stranger had elsewhere  
 Perish'd, or ever he had here arrived, 501  
 Then no such uproar had he caused as this !  
 This doth the beggar ; he it is for whom  
 We wrangle thus, and may despair of peace  
 Or pleasure more ; now look for strife alone. 505

Then in the midst Telemachus upstood  
 Majestic, and the suitors thus bespake.  
 Sirs ! ye are mad, and can no longer eat  
 Or drink in peace ; some dæmon troubles you.  
 But since ye all have feasted, to your homes 510  
 Go now, and, at your pleasure, to your beds ;  
 Soonest were best, but I thrust no man hence.

He ceased ; they gnawing stood their lips, aghast  
 With wonder that Telemachus in his speech  
 Such boldness used. Then rose Amphinomus, 515  
 Brave son of Nisus offspring of the King  
 Aretus, and the assembly thus address'd.

My friends ! let none with contradiction thwart  
 And rude reply words rational and just ;  
 Assault no more the stranger, nor of all 520  
 The servants of renown'd Ulysses here  
 Harm any. Come. Let the cup-bearer fill

To all, that due libation made, to rest  
We may repair at home, leaving the Prince  
To accommodate beneath his father's roof 525  
The stranger, for he is the Prince's guest.

He ended, whose advice none disapproved.  
The Hero Milius then, Dulichian-born,  
And herald of Amphinomus, the cup  
Filling, dispensed it, as he stood, to all ; 530  
They, pouring forth to the Immortals, quaff'd  
The luscious beverage, and when each had made  
Libation, and such measure as he would  
Of wine had drunk, then all to rest retired.



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# THE ODYSSEY.



BOOK XIX.

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#### ARGUMENT OF THE NINETEENTH BOOK.

Ulysses and Telemachus remove the arms from the hall to an upper-chamber. The Hero then confers with Penelope, to whom he gives a fictitious narrative of his adventures. Euryclea, while bathing Ulysses, discovers him by a scar on his knee, but he prevents her communication of that discovery to Penelope.

# THE ODYSSEY.

## BOOK XIX.

THEY went, but left the noble Chief behind  
In his own house, contriving, by the aid  
Of Pallas, the destruction of them all,  
And thus, in accents wing'd, again he said.  
My son! we must remove and safe dispose      5  
All these my well-forged implements of war;  
And should the suitors, missing them, enquire  
Where are they? thou shalt answer smoothly thus—  
I have convey'd them from the reach of smoke,  
For they appear no more the same which erst      10  
Ulysses, going hence to Ilium, left,  
So smirch'd and sullied by the breath of fire.  
This weightier reason (thou shalt also say)  
Some God suggested to me,—lest, inflamed  
With wine, ye wound each other in your brawls,      15  
Shaming both feast and courtship; for the view  
Itself of arms incites to their abuse.

He ceased, and in obedience to his will,



Calling the antient Euryclea forth,  
His nurse, Telemachus enjoin'd her thus. 20

Go—shut the women in; make fast the doors  
Of their apartment, while I safe dispose  
Elsewhere my father's implements of war,  
Which, during his long absence, here have stood  
Till smoke hath sullied them. For I have been 25  
An infant hitherto, but wiser grown,  
Would now remove them from the breath of fire.

Then thus the gentle matron in return.  
Yes truly,—and I wish that now, at length,  
Thou would'st assert the privilege of thy years, 30  
My son, thyself assuming charge of all,  
Both house and stores; but who shall bear the light?  
Since they, it seems, who would, are all forbidden.

To whom Telemachus discrete replied.  
This guest; for no man, from my table fed, 35  
Come whence he may, shall be an idler here.

He ended, nor his words flew wing'd away,  
But Euryclea bolted every door.  
Then, starting to the task, Ulysses caught,  
And his illustrious son, the weapons thence, 40  
Helmet, and bossy shield, and pointed spear,  
While Pallas from a golden lamp illumed  
The dusky way before them. At that sight  
Alarm'd, the Prince his father thus address'd.

Whence—whence is this, my father? I behold 45  
A prodigy! the walls of the whole house,  
The arches, fir-tree beams, and pillars tall

Shine in my view, as with the blaze of fire!  
Some Power celestial, doubtless, is within.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied. 50  
Soft! ask no questions. Give no vent to thought.  
Such is the custom of the Powers divine.  
Hence, thou, to bed. I stay, that I may yet  
Both in thy mother and her maidens move  
More curiosity; yes—she with tears 55  
Shall question me of all that I have seen.

He ended, and the Prince, at his command,  
Guided by flaming torches, sought the couch  
Where he was wont to sleep, and there he slept  
On that night also, waiting the approach 60  
Of sacred dawn. Thus was Ulysses left  
Alone, and planning sat in solitude,  
By Pallas' aid, the slaughter of his foes.

At length, Diana-like, or like herself  
All golden Venus, (her apartment left,) 65  
• Enter'd Penelope. Beside the hearth  
Her women planted her accustom'd seat  
With silver wreathed and ivory. That throne  
Icmalius made, artist renown'd, and join'd  
A footstool to its splendid frame beneath, 70  
Which ever with an ample fleece they spread.  
There sat discrete Penelope; then came  
Her beautiful attendants from within,  
Who clear'd the litter'd bread, the board, and cups  
From which the insolent companions drank. 75  
They also raked the embers from the hearths  
Now dim, and with fresh billets piled them high,

Both for illumination and for warmth.

Then yet again Melantho with rude speech

Opprobrious, thus, assail'd Ulysses' ear. 80

Guest—wilt thou trouble us throughout the night

Ranging the house? and linger'st thou a spy

Watching the women? Hence—get thee abroad,

Glad of such fare as thou hast found, or soon

With torches beaten we will thrust thee forth. 85

To whom Ulysses, frowning stern, replied.

Petulant woman! wherefore thus incensed

Inveigh'st thou against me? is it because

I am not sleek? because my garb is mean?

Because I beg? thanks to necessity— 90

I would not else. But such as I appear,

Such all who beg and all who wander are.

I also lived the happy owner once

Of such a stately mansion, and have given

To numerous wanderers, whencesoe'er they came, 95

All that they needed; I was also served

By many, and enjoy'd all that denotes

The envied owner opulent and blest.

But Jove (for so it pleased him) hath reduced

My all to nothing. Therefore well beware 100

Thou also, mistress! lest a day arrive

When all these charms by which thou shinest among

Thy sister-menials, fade; fear, too, lest her

Thou should'st perchance irritate, whom thou servest,

And lest Ulysses come, of whose return 105

Hope yet survives; but even though the Chief

Have perish'd, as ye think, and comes no more,

Consider yet his son, how bright the gifts  
Shine of Apollo in the illustrious Prince  
Telemachus; no woman, unobserved 110  
By him, can now commit a trespass here;  
His days of heedless infancy are past.

He ended, whom Penelope discrete  
O'erhearing, her attendant sharp rebuked.  
Shameless, audacious woman! known to me 115  
Is thy great wickedness, which with thy life  
Thou shalt atone; for thou wast well aware,  
(Hearing it from myself,) that I design'd  
To ask this stranger of my absent Lord,  
For whose dear sake I never cease to mourn. 120

Then to her household's governess she said;  
Bring now a seat, and spread it with a fleece,  
Eurynome! that, undisturb'd, the guest  
May hear and answer all that I shall ask.

She ended. Then the matron brought in haste 125  
A polish'd seat, and spread it with a fleece,  
On which the toil-accustom'd Hero sat,  
And thus the chaste Penelope began.

Stranger! my first enquiry shall be this—  
Who art thou? whence? where born, and sprung from  
whom? 130

Then answer thus Ulysses, wise, return'd.  
O Queen! uncensurable by the lips  
Of mortal man! thy glory climbs the skies  
Unrivall'd, like the praise of some great King  
Who o'er a numerous people and renown'd 135  
Presiding like a Deity, maintains

Justice and truth. The earth, under his sway,  
 Her produce yields abundantly; the trees  
 Fruit-laden bend; the lusty flocks bring forth;  
 The Ocean teems with finny swarms beneath 140  
 His just controul, and all the land is blest.  
 Me therefore question of what else thou wilt  
 In thy own palace, but forbear to ask  
 From whom I sprang, and of my native land,  
 Lest thou, reminding me of those sad themes, 145  
 Augment my woes; for I have much endured;  
 Nor were it seemly, in another's house,  
 To pass the hours in sorrow and in tears,  
 Wearisome when indulged with no regard  
 To time or place; thy train (perchance thyself) 150  
 Would blame me, and I should reproach incur  
 As one tear-deluged through excess of wine.

Him answer'd then Penelope discrete.  
 The immortal Gods, O stranger, then destroy'd  
 My form, my grace, my beauty, when the Greeks 155  
 Whom my Ulysses follow'd, sail'd to 'Troy.  
 Could he, returning, my domestic charge  
 Himself intend, far better would my fame  
 Be so secured, and wider far diffused.  
 But I am wretched now, such storms of woe 160  
 The Gods have sent me; for as many Chiefs  
 As hold dominion in the neighbour isles  
 Samos, Dulichium, and the forest-crown'd  
 Zacynthus; others, also, rulers here  
 In pleasant Ithaca, me, loth to wed, 165  
 Woo ceaseless, and my household stores consume.

I, therefore, neither guest nor suppliant heed,  
Nor public herald more, but with regret  
Of my Ulysses wear my soul away.  
They, meantime, press my nuptials, which by art 170  
I still procrastinate. Some God the thought  
Suggested to me, to commence a robe  
Of amplest measure and of subtlest woof,  
Laborious task ; which done, I thus address'd them.  
Princes, my suitors ! since the noble Chief 175  
Ulysses is no more, enforce not now  
My nuptials ; wait till I shall finish first  
A funeral robe, (lest all my threads be marr'd,)  
Which for the ancient Hero I prepare  
Laertes, looking for the mournful hour 180  
When fate shall snatch him to eternal rest.  
Else, I the censure dread of all my sex,  
Should he, so wealthy, want at last a shroud.  
Such was my speech ; they, unsuspecting all,  
With my request complied. Thenceforth, all day 185  
I wove the ample web, and, by the aid  
Of torches, ravell'd it again at night.  
Three years by artifice I thus their suit  
Eluded safe ; but when the fourth arrived,  
And the same season after many moons 190  
And fleeting days return'd, passing my train  
Who had neglected to release the dogs,  
They came, surprised, and reprimanded me.  
Thus, through necessity, not choice, at last  
I have perform'd it, in my own despatch. 195  
But no escape from marriage now remains,

Nor other subterfuge for me; meantime  
My parents urge my nuptials, and my son  
(Of age to note it) with disgust observes  
His wealth consumed; for he is now become 230  
Adult, and abler than myself to rule  
The house, a Prince distinguish'd by the Gods.  
Yet, stranger, after all, speak thy descent;  
Say whence thou art; for not of fabulous birth  
Art thou, nor from the oak, nor from the rock. 205

Her answer'd then Ulysses, ever-wise.  
O spouse revered of Laertiades!  
Resolvest thou still to learn from whom I sprang?  
Learn then; but know that thou shalt much augment  
My present grief, natural to a man 210  
Who hath, like me, long exiled from his home  
Through various cities of the sons of men  
Wander'd remote, and numerous woes endured.  
Yet, though it pain me, I will tell thee all.

There is a land amid the sable flood 215  
Call'd Crete; fair, fruitful, circled by the sea.  
Numerous are her inhabitants, a race  
Not to be summ'd, and ninety towns she boasts.  
Diverse their language is; Achaians some,  
And some indigenous are; Cydonians there, 220  
Crest-shaking Dorians, and Pelasgians dwell.  
One city in extent the rest exceeds,  
Knossus; the city in which Minos reign'd,  
Who, ever at a nine-years-close, conferr'd  
With Jove himself; from him my father sprang, 225  
The brave Deucalion; for Deucalion's sons

Were two, myself and King Idomeneus.  
To Ilium he, on board his gallant barks  
Follow'd the Atridæ. I, the youngest-born,  
By my illustrious name, Æthon, am known, 230  
But he ranks foremost both in worth and years.  
There I beheld Ulysses, and within  
My walls received him ; for a violent wind  
Had driven him from Malea (while he sought  
The shores of 'Troy) to Crete. The storm his barks  
Bore into the Amnisus, for the cave 236  
Of Ilythia known, a dangerous port,  
And which with difficulty he attain'd.  
He, landing, instant to the city went,  
Seeking Idomeneus ; his friend of old, 240  
As he affirm'd, and one whom much he loved.  
But *he* was far remote, ten days advanced,  
Perhaps eleven, on his course to 'Troy.  
Him therefore I conducted to my home,  
Where hospitably, and with kindest care 245  
I entertain'd him, (for I wanted nought)  
And for himself procured and for his band,  
By public contribution, corn, and wine,  
And beeves for food, that all might be sufficed.  
'Twelve days his noble Greccians there abode, 250  
Port-lock'd by Boreas blowing with a force  
Resistless even on the land, some God  
So roused his fury ; but the thirteenth day  
The wind all fell, and they embark'd again.  
With many a fiction specious, as he sat, 255  
He thus her ear amused ; she at the sound



Melting, with fluent tears her cheeks bedew'd ;  
And as the snow by Zephyrus diffused,  
Melts on the mountain tops, when Eurus breathes,  
And fills the channels of the running streams,      260  
So melted she, and down her lovely cheeks  
Pour'd fast the tears, him mourning as remote  
Who sat beside her. Soft compassion touch'd  
Ulysses of his consort's silent woe ;  
His eyes, as they had been of steel or horn,      265  
Moved not, yet artful, he suppress'd his tears,  
And she, at length, with overflowing grief  
Sate, and thus enquired again.

Now, stranger, I shall prove thee, as I judge,  
If thou, indeed, hast entertain'd in Crete      270  
My spouse and his brave followers, as thou say'st.  
Describe his raiment and himself ; his own  
Appearance, and the appearance of his friends.

Then her Ulysses answer'd, ever-wise.  
Hard is the task, O Queen ! (so long a time      275  
Hath since elapsed,) to tell thee. Twenty years  
Have pass'd since he forsook my native isle,  
Yet, from my best remembrance, I will give  
A likeness of him, such as now I may.  
A double cloak, thick-piled, Mæonian-dyed,      280  
The noble Chief had on ; two fastenings held  
The golden clasp, and it display'd in front  
A well-wrought pattern with much art design'd.  
An hound between his fore-feet holding fast  
A dappled fawn, gap'd eager on his prey.      285  
All wonder'd, seeing how in lifeless gold

Express'd, the dog with open mouth her throat  
Attempted still, and how the fawn with hoofs  
Thrust trembling forward, struggled to escape.  
That glorious mantle much I noticed, soft 290  
To touch, as the dried garlick's glossy film;  
Such was the smoothness of it, and it shone  
Sun-bright; full many a maiden, trust me, view'd  
The splendid texture with admiring eyes.  
But mark me now; deep treasure in thy mind 295  
This word. I know not if Ulysses wore  
That cloak at home, or whether of his train  
Some warrior gave it to him on his way,  
Or else some host of his; for many loved  
Ulysses, and with him might few compare. 300  
I gave to him, myself, a brazen sword,  
A purple cloak magnificent, and vest  
Of royal length, and, when he sought his bark,  
With princely pomp dismiss'd him from the shore.  
An herald also waited on the Chief, 305  
Somewhat his senior; him I next describe.  
His back was bunch'd, his visage swarthy, curl'd  
His poll, and he was named Eurybates;  
A man whom most of all his followers far  
Ulysses honour'd, for their minds were one. 310  
He ceased; she, recognizing all the proofs  
Distinctly by Ulysses named, was moved  
Still more to weep, till with o'erflowing grief  
Sate, at length she answer'd him again.  
Henceforth, O stranger, thou who hadst before 315  
My pity, shalt my reverence share and love.

I folded for him with these hands the cloak  
Which thou describest, produced it when he went,  
And gave it to him; I that splendid clasp  
Attach'd to it myself, more to adorn 320  
My honour'd Lord, whom to his native land  
Return'd secure I shall receive no more.

In such an evil hour Ulysses went  
To that bad city never to be named.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied. 325  
Consort revered of Laertiades!

No longer let anxiety impair  
Thy beauteous form, nor any grief consume  
Thy spirits more for thy Ulysses' sake.  
And yet I blame thee not; a wife deprived 330  
Of her first mate to whom she had produced  
Fair fruit of mutual love, would mourn his loss,  
Although he were inferior far to thine,  
Whom fame affirms the semblance of the Gods.  
But cease to mourn. Hear me. I will relate 335  
A faithful tale, nor will from thee withhold  
Such tidings of Ulysses living still,  
And of his safe return, as I have heard  
Lately, in yon neighbouring opulent land  
Of the Thesprotians. He returns enrich'd 340  
With many precious stores from those obtain'd  
Whom he hath visited; but he hath lost,  
Departing from 'Thrinacia's isle, his bark  
And all his loved companions in the Deep,  
For Jove was adverse to him, and the Sun, 345  
Whose beeves his followers slew. They perish'd all

Amid the billowy flood; but Him, the keel  
 Bestriding of his bark, the waves at length  
 Cast forth on the Phæacian's land, a race  
 Allied to heaven, who revered like a God 350  
 Thy husband, honour'd him with numerous gifts,  
 And willing were to have convey'd him home.  
 Ulysses, therefore, had attain'd long since  
 His native shore, but that he deem'd it best  
 To travel far, that he might still amass 355  
 More wealth; so much Ulysses all mankind  
 Excels in policy, and hath no peer.  
 This information from Thesprotia's King  
 I gain'd, from Phidon; to myself he swore  
 Libation offering under his own roof, 360  
 That both the bark was launch'd, and the stout crew  
 Prepared, that should conduct him to his home.  
 But me he first dismiss'd; for, as it chanced,  
 A ship lay there of the Thesprotians, bound  
 To corn-enrich'd Dulichium. All the wealth 365  
 He shew'd me by the Chief amass'd, a store  
 To feed the house of yet another Prince  
 To the tenth generation; so immense  
 His treasures were within that palace lodged.  
 Himself he said was to Dodona gone, 370  
 Counsel to ask from the oracular oaks  
 Sublime of Jove, how safest he might seek,  
 After long exile thence, his native land,  
 If openly were best, or in disguise.  
 Thus, therefore, he is safe, and at his home 375

Well-nigh arrived, nor shall his country long  
Want him. I swear it with a solemn oath.  
First Jove be witness, King and Lord of all !  
Next these domestic Gods of the renown'd  
Ulysses, in whose royal house I sit, 389  
That thou shalt see my saying all fulfill'd.  
Ulysses shall this self-same year return,  
This self-same month, ere yet the next begin.

Him answer'd then Penelope discrete. 381  
Grant heaven, my guest, that this good word of thine  
Fail not ! then, soon shalt thou such bounty share  
And friendship at my hands, that, at first sight,  
Whoe'er shall meet thee shall pronounce thee blest.  
But ah ! my soul forebodes how it will prove ;  
Neither Ulysses will return, nor thou 390  
Receive safe conduct hence ; for we have here  
None, such as once Ulysses was, to rule  
His household with authority, and to send  
With honourable convoy to his home  
The worthy guest, or to regale him here. 395  
Give him the bath, my maidens ; spread his couch  
With linen soft, with fleecy gaberdines<sup>1</sup>  
And rugs of splendid hue, that he may lie  
Waiting, well-warm'd, the golden morn's return.  
Attend him also at the peep of day 400  
With bath and unction, that, his seat resumed  
Here in the palace, he may be prepared

<sup>1</sup> A gaberdine is a shaggy cloak of coarse but warm materials. Such always make part of Homer's bed-furniture.

For breakfast with Telemachus ; and woe  
To him who shall presume to incommode  
Or cause him pain ; that man shall be cashier'd 405  
Hence instant, burn his anger as it may.  
For how, my honour'd inmate ! shalt thou learn  
That I in wisdom œconomic aught  
Pass other women, if unbathed, unoil'd,  
Ill-clad, thou sojourn here ? man's life is short. 410  
Whoso is cruel, and to cruel arts  
Addict, on him all men, while yet he lives,  
Call plagues and curses down, and after death  
Scorn and proverbial mockeries hunt his name.  
But men, humane themselves, and given by choice 415  
To offices humane, from land to land  
Are rumour'd honourably by their guests,  
And every tongue is busy in their praise.

Her answer'd then Ulysses ever-wise.  
Consort revered of Laertiades ! 420  
Warm gaberdines and rugs of splendid hue  
To me have odious been, since first the sight  
Of Crete's snow-mantled mountain-tops, I lost,  
Sweeping the billows with extended oars.  
No ; I will pass, as I am wont to pass 425  
The sleepless night ; for on a sordid couch  
Outstretch'd, full many a night have I reposed  
Till golden-charioted Aurora dawn'd.  
Nor me the foot-bath pleases more ; my foot  
Shall none of all thy ministring maidens touch, 430  
Unless there be some antient matron grave  
Among them, who hath pangs of heart endured

Numerous, and keen as I have felt myself;  
Her I refuse not. She may touch my feet.

Him answer'd then prudent Penelope. 435

Dear guest! for of all travellers here arrived  
From distant regions, I have none received  
Discrete as thou, or whom I more have loved,  
So just thy matter is, and with such grace  
Express'd,—I have an ancient maiden grave, 440  
The nurse who at my hapless husband's birth  
Received him in her arms, and with kind care  
Maternal rear'd him; she shall wash thy feet,  
Although decrepid. Euryclea, rise!

Wash one coeval with thy Lord; for such 445  
The feet and hands, it may be, are become  
Of my Ulysses now; since man beset  
With sorrow once, soon wrinkled grows and old.

She said, then Euryclea with both hands  
Covering her face, in tepid tears profuse 450  
Dissolved, and thus in mournful strains began.

Alas! my son, trouble for thy dear sake  
Distracts me. Jove surely of all mankind  
Thee hated most, though ever in thy heart  
Devoutly given; for never mortal man 455  
So many thighs of fatted victims burn'd,  
And chosen hecatombs produced as thou  
To Jove the Thunderer, him entreating still  
That he would grant thee a serene old age,  
And to instruct, thyself, thy glorious son. 460  
Yet thus the God requites thee, cutting off  
All hope of thy return:—oh ancient sir!

Him too, perchance, where'er he sits a guest  
Beneath some foreign roof, the women taunt,  
As all these shameless ones have taunted thee, 465  
Fearing whose mockery thou forbidd'st their hands  
This office, which Icarius' daughter wise  
To me enjoins, and which I, glad, perform.  
Yes, I will wash thy feet; both for her sake  
And for thy own,—for sight of thee hath raised 470  
A tempest in my mind. Hear now the cause!  
Full many a guest forlorn we entertain,  
But never any have I seen, whose size,  
The fashion of whose foot, and pitch of voice,  
Such likeness of Ulysses show'd, as thine. 475

To whom Ulysses, ever shrewd, replied.  
Such close similitude, O antient dame!  
As thou observest between thy Lord and me,  
All who have seen us both, have ever found.

He said; then taking the resplendent vase 480  
Allotted always to that use, she first  
Infused cold water largely, then the warm.  
Ulysses (for beside the hearth he sat)  
Turn'd quick his face into the shade, alarm'd  
Lest, handling him, she should at once remark 485  
His scar, and all his stratagem unveil.  
She then, approaching, minister'd the bath  
To her own King, and at first touch discern'd  
That token, by a bright-tusk'd boar of old  
Impress'd, what time he to Parnassus went 490  
To visit there Autolycus and his sons,  
His mother's noble sire, who all mankind



In furtive<sup>2</sup> arts and fraudulent oaths excell'd.  
 For such endowments he by gifts received  
 From Hermes' self, to whom the thighs of kids      495  
 He offer'd and of lambs, and, in return,  
 The watchful Hermes never left his side.

Autolycus, arriving in the isle  
 Of pleasant Ithaca, the new-born son  
 Of his own daughter found, whom on his knees      500  
 At close of supper Euryclea placed,  
 And thus the royal visitant address'd.

Thyself, Autolycus ! devise a name  
 For thy own daughter's son, by numerous prayers  
 Of thine and fervent, from the Gods obtained.      505

Then answer thus Autolycus return'd.  
 My daughter and my daughter's spouse ! the name  
 Which I shall give your boy, that let him bear.  
 Since after provocation and offence  
 To numbers given of either sex, I come,      510  
 Call him, Ulysses<sup>3</sup>; and when, grown mature,  
 He shall Parnassus visit, the abode  
 Magnificent in which his mother dwelt,  
 And where my treasures lie, from my own stores  
 I will enrich and send him joyful home.      515

<sup>2</sup> Homer's morals seem to allow to a good man dissimulation, and even an ambiguous oath, should they be necessary to save him from a villain. Thus in Book XX. Telemachus swears by Zeus, that he does not hinder his mother from marrying whom she pleases of the wooers, though at the same time he is plotting their destruction with his father. F.

<sup>3</sup> In the Greek 'ΟΔΥΣΣΕΥΣ' from the verb 'οδύσσω—Irascor, *I am angry*.

Ulysses, therefore, that he might obtain  
Those princely gifts, went thither. Him arrived,  
With right-hand gratulation and with words  
Of welcome kind, Autolycus received,  
Nor less his offspring ; but the mother most 520  
Of his own mother clung around his neck,  
Amphithea ; she with many a fervent kiss  
His forehead press'd, and his bright-beaming eyes.  
Then bade Autolycus his noble sons  
Set forth a banquet. They, at his command, 525  
Led in a fatted ox of the fifth year,  
Which slaying first, they spread him carved abroad,  
Then scored his flesh, transfix'd it with the spits,  
And roasting all with culinary skill  
Exact, gave each a portion. Thus they sat 530  
Feasting all day, and till the sun declined ;  
But when the sun declined, and darkness fell,  
Each sought his couch, and took the gift of sleep.  
Then, soon as day-spring's daughter rosy-palm'd  
Aurora look'd abroad, forth went the hounds, 535  
And with the hounds Ulysses, and the youths,  
Sons of Autolycus, to chase the boar.  
Arrived at the Parnassian mount, they climb'd  
His bushy sides, and to his airy heights  
Ere long attain'd. It was the pleasant hour 540  
When from the gently-swelling flood profound  
The sun, emerging, first smote on the fields.  
The hunters reach'd the valley ; foremost ran,  
Questing, the hounds ; behind them, swift, the sons  
Came of Autolycus, with whom advanced 545

The illustrious Prince Ulysses, pressing close  
The hounds, and brandishing his massy spear.  
There, hid in thickest shades, lay an huge boar.  
That covert neither rough winds blowing moist  
Could penetrate, nor could the noon-day sun 550  
Smite through it, or fast falling showers pervade,  
So thick it was, and underneath, the ground  
With litter of dry foliage strew'd profuse.  
Hunters and dogs approaching him, his ear  
The sound of feet perceived; upridging high 555  
His bristly back and glaring fire, he sprang  
Forth from the shrubs, and in defiance stood  
Near and right opposite. Ulysses, first,  
Rush'd on him, elevating his long spear  
Ardent to wound him; but, preventing quick 560  
His foe, the boar gash'd him above the knee.  
Much flesh, assailing him oblique, he tore  
With his rude tusk, but to the Hero's bone  
Pierced not; Ulysses *his* right shoulder reach'd;  
And with a deadly thrust impell'd the point 565  
Of his bright spear through him and far beyond.  
Loud yell'd the boar, sank in the dust, and died.  
Around Ulysses, then, the busy sons  
Throng'd of Autolycus; expert they braced  
The wound of the illustrious hunter bold, 570  
With incantation stanch'd the sable blood,  
And sought in haste their father's house again,  
Whence, heal'd and gratified with splendid gifts  
They sent him soon rejoicing to his home,  
Themselves rejoicing also. Glad their son 575

His parents saw again, and of the scar  
Enquired, where given, and how? He told them all,  
How to Parnassus with his friends he went,  
Sons of Autolycus to hunt, and how  
A boar had gash'd him with his ivory tusk. 580

That scar, while chafing him with open palms,  
The matron knew; she left his foot to fall;  
Down dropp'd his leg into the vase; the brass  
Rang, and, o'ertilted by the sudden shock,  
Pour'd forth the water, flooding wide the floor. 585

*Her* spirit joy at once and sorrow seized;  
Tears fill'd her eyes; her intercepted voice  
Died in her throat; but to Ulysses' beard  
Her hand advancing, thus, at length she spake.

Thou art himself, Ulysses. Oh my son! 590  
Dear to me, and my master as thou art,  
I knew thee not, till I had touch'd the scar.

She said, and to Penelope her eyes  
Directed, all impatient to declare  
Her own Ulysses even then at home. 595

But she, nor eye nor ear for aught that pass'd  
Had then, her fixt attention so entire  
Minerva had engaged. Then, darting forth  
His arms, the Hero with his right-hand close  
Compress'd her throat, and nearer to himself 600  
Drawing her with his left, thus caution'd her.

Why would'st thou ruin me? Thou gavest me milk  
Thyself from thy own breast. See me return'd  
After long sufferings, in the twentieth year,  
To my own land. But since (some God the thought

Suggesting to thee) thou hast learn'd the truth, 606  
Silence ! lest others learn it from thy lips.

For this I say, nor shall the threat be vain ;

If God vouchsafe to me to overcome

The haughty suitors, when I shall inflict 610

Death on the other women of my house,

Although my nurse, thyself shalt also die.

Him answer'd Euryclea then, discrete.

My son ! oh how could so severe a word

Escape thy lips ? my fortitude of mind 615

Thou know'st, and even now shalt prove me firm

As iron, secret as the stubborn rock.

But hear and mark me well. Should'st thou prevail,

Assisted by a Power divine, to slay

The haughty suitors, I will then, myself, 620

Give thee to know of all the female train

Who have dishonour'd thee, and who respect.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied.

My nurse, it were superfluous ; spare thy tongue

That needless task. I can distinguish well 625

Myself, between them, and shall know them all ;

But hold thy peace. Hush ! leave it with the Gods.

So he ; then went the antient matron forth,

That she might serve him with a second bath,

For the whole first was spilt. Thus, laved at length,

And smooth'd with oil, Ulysses nearer pull'd 631

His seat toward the glowing hearth to enjoy

More warmth, and drew his tatters o'er the scar.

Then, prudent, thus Penelope began.

One question, stranger, I shall yet propound, 635

Though brief, for soon the hour of soft repose  
Grateful to all, and even to the sad  
Whom gentle sleep forsakes not, will arrive.  
But heaven to me immeasurable woe  
Assigns,—whose sole delight is to consume 640  
My days in sighs, while here retired I sit,  
Watching my maidens' labours and my own ;  
But (night return'd, and all to bed retired)  
I press mine also, yet with deep regret  
And anguish lacerated, even there. 645  
As when at spring's first entrance, her sweet song  
The azure-crested nightingale renews,  
Daughter of Pandarus ; within the grove's  
Thick foliage perch'd, she pours her echoing voice  
Now deep, now clear, still varying the strain 650  
With which she mourns her Itylus, her son  
By royal Zethus, whom she, erring<sup>4</sup>, slew,  
So also I, by soul distressing doubts  
Toss'd ever, muse if I shall here remain  
A faithful guardian of my son's affairs, 655  
My husband's bed respecting, and not less  
My own fair fame, or whether I shall him  
Of all my suitors follow to his home  
Who noblest seems, and offers richest dower.  
My son while he was infant yet, and own'd 660

<sup>4</sup> She intended to slay the son of her husband's brother Amphion, incited to it by envy of his wife, who had six children, while herself had only two, but through mistake she slew her own son Itylus, and for her punishment was transformed by Jupiter into a nightingale.

An infant's mind, could never give consent  
That I should wed and leave him ; but, at length,  
Since he hath reach'd the stature of a man,  
He wishes my departure hence, the waste  
Viewing indignant by the suitors made. 665

But I have dream'd. Hear, and expound my dream.  
My geese are twenty, which within my walls  
I feed with sodden wheat ; they serve to amuse  
Sometimes my sorrow. From the mountains came  
An eagle, huge, hook-beak'd, brake all their necks,  
And slew them ; scatter'd on the palace-floor 671  
They lay, and he soar'd swift into the skies.

Dream only as it was, I wept aloud,  
Till all my maidens, gather'd by my voice,  
Arriving, found me weeping still, and still 675  
Complaining, that the eagle had at once  
Slain all my geese. But, to the palace-roof  
Stooping again, he sat, and with a voice  
Of human sound, forbid my tears, and said—

Courage ! O daughter of the far-renown'd 680  
Icarius ! no vain dream thou hast beheld,  
But, in thy sleep, a truth. The slaughter'd geese  
Denote thy suitors. I who have appear'd  
An eagle in thy sight, am yet indeed  
Thy husband, who have now, at last, return'd, 685  
Death, horrid death designing for them all.

He said ; then waking at the voice, I cast  
An anxious look around, and saw my geese  
Beside their tray, all feeding as before.

Her then Ulysses answer'd, ever-wise. 690

O Queen ! it is not possible to miss  
Thy dream's plain import, since Ulysses' self  
Hath told thee the event; thy suitors all  
Must perish; not one suitor shall escape.

To whom Penelope discrete replied. 693  
Dreams are inexplicable, O my guest !  
And oft-times mere delusions that receive  
No just accomplishment. There are two gates<sup>5</sup>  
Through which the fleeting phantoms pass; of horn  
Is one, and one of ivory. Such dreams 700  
As through the thin-leaf'd ivory portal come  
Soothe, but perform not, uttering empty sounds;  
But such as through the polish'd horn escape,  
If haply seen by any mortal eye,  
Prove faithful witnesses, and are fulfill'd. 705  
But through those gates my wondrous dream, I think,  
Came not; thrice welcome were it else to me  
And to my son. Now mark my words; attend.  
This is the hated morn that from the house  
Removes me of Ulysses. I shall fix, 710  
This day, the rings for trial to them all  
Of archership; Ulysses' custom was  
To plant twelve spikes<sup>6</sup>, all regular arranged

<sup>5</sup> The difference of the two substances may perhaps serve to account for the preference given in this case to the gate of horn; horn being transparent, and as such emblematical of truth; while ivory, from its whiteness, promises light, but is, in fact, opaque. F.

<sup>6</sup> The translation here is somewhat pleonastic for the sake of perspicuity; the original is clear in itself, but not to us who



Like galley-props, and crested with a ring,  
Then standing far remote, true in his aim 715  
He with his whizzing shaft would thrid them all.  
This is the contest in which now I mean  
To prove the suitors ; him, who with most ease  
Shall bend the bow, and shoot through all the rings,  
I follow, this dear mansion of my youth 720  
Leaving, so fair, so fill'd with every good,  
'Though still to love it even in my dreams.

Her answer'd then Ulysses, ever-wise.  
Consort revered of Laertiades !  
Postpone not this contention, but appoint 725  
Forthwith the trial ; for Ulysses here  
Will sure arrive, ere they (his polish'd bow  
Long tampering) shall prevail to stretch the nerve,  
And speed the arrow through the iron rings.

To whom Penelope replied discrete. 730  
Would'st thou with thy sweet converse, O my guest !  
Here soothe me still, sleep ne'er should influence  
These eyes the while ; but always to resist  
Sleep's power is not for man, to whom the Gods  
Each circumstance of his condition here 735  
Fix universally. Myself will seek  
My own apartment at the palace-top,  
And there will lay me down on my sad couch,  
For such it hath been, and with tears of mine

have no such practice. Twelve stakes were fixed in the earth,  
each having a ring at the top ; the order in which they stood  
was so exact, that an arrow sent with an even hand through  
the first ring, would pass them all.

Ceaseless bedew'd, e'er since Ulysses went 740  
To that bad city, never to be named.  
There will I sleep ; but sleep thou here below,  
Either, thyself, preparing on the ground  
Thy couch, or on a couch by these prepared.

So saying, she to her splendid chamber thence 745  
Retired, not sole, but by her female train  
Attended ; there arrived, she wept her spouse,  
Her loved Ulysses, till Minerva dropp'd  
The balm of slumber on her weary lids.



•

# THE ODYSSEY.



## BOOK XX.

## ARGUMENT OF THE TWENTIETH BOOK.

Ulysses, doubting whether he shall destroy or not the women servants who commit lewdness with the suitors, resolves at length to spare them for the present. He asks an omen from Jupiter, and that he would grant him also to hear some propitious words from the lips of one in the family. His petitions are both answered. Preparation is made for the feast. Whilst the suitors sit at table, Pallas smites them with a horrid frenzy. Theoclymenus, observing the strange effects of it, prophesies their destruction, and they deride his prophecy.

# THE ODYSSEY.

## BOOK XX.

BUT in the vestibule the Hero lay  
On a bull's hide undress'd, o'er which he spread  
The fleece of many a sheep slain by the Greeks,  
And, cover'd by the household's governess  
With a wide cloak, composed himself to rest. 5  
Yet slept he not, but meditating lay  
Woe to his enemies. Meantime the train  
Of women wonted to the suitors' arms,  
Issuing all mirth and laughter, in his soul  
A tempest raised of doubts, whether at once 10  
To slay, or to permit them yet to give  
Their lusty paramours one last embrace.  
As growls the mastiff standing on the start  
For battle, if a stranger's foot approach  
Her cubs new-whelp'd—so growl'd Ulysses' heart, 15  
While wonder fill'd him at their impious deeds.  
But, smiting on his breast, thus he reproved  
The mutinous inhabitant within.

Heart! bear it. Worse than this thou didst endure  
When, uncontrollable by force of man, 20

The Cyclops thy illustrious friends devour'd.  
Thy patience then fail'd not, till prudence found  
Deliverance for thee on the brink of fate.

So disciplined the Hero his own heart,  
Which, tractable, endured the rigorous curb, 25  
And patient; yet he turn'd from side to side.  
As when some hungry swain turns oft a maw  
Unctuous and savoury on the burning coals,  
Quick expediting his desired repast,  
So he from side to side roll'd, pondering deep 30  
How likeliest with success he might assail  
Those shameless suitors; one to many opposed.  
Then, sudden from the skies descending, came  
Minerva in a female form; her stand  
Above his head she took, and thus she spake. 35

Why sleep'st thou not, unhappiest of mankind?  
Thou art at home; here dwells thy wife, and here  
Thy son; a son, whom all might wish their own.

Then her Ulysses answer'd, ever-wise.  
O Goddess! true is all that thou hast said, 40  
But, not without anxiety, I muse  
How, single as I am, I shall assail  
Those shameless suitors who frequent my courts  
Daily, and always their whole multitude.  
This weightier theme I meditate beside; 45  
Should I, with Jove's concurrence and with thine  
Prevail to slay them, how shall I escape,  
Myself<sup>1</sup>, at last? oh Goddess, weigh it well.

<sup>1</sup> That is, how shall I escape the vengeance of their kindred?

Him answer'd then Pallas cœrulean-eyed.  
Oh faithless man ! a man will in his friend 50  
Confide, though mortal, and in valour less  
And wisdom than himself; but I who keep  
Thee in all difficulties, am divine.

I tell thee plainly. Were we hemm'd around  
By fifty troops of shouting warriors bent 55  
To slay thee, thou should'st yet securely drive  
The flocks away and cattle of them all.

But yield to sleep's soft influence; for to lie  
All night thus watchful, is, itself, distress.  
Fear not. Deliverance waits, not far remote. 60

So saying, she o'er Ulysses' eyes diffused  
Soft slumbers, and when sleep that soothes the mind  
And nerves the limbs afresh had seized him once,  
To the Olympian summit swift return'd.

But his chaste spouse awoke; she weeping sat 65  
On her soft couch, and noblest of her sex,  
Sate at length with tears, her prayer address'd  
First to Diana of the Powers above.

Diana, awful progeny of Jove !  
I would that with a shaft this moment sped 70  
Into my bosom, thou would'st here conclude  
My mournful life ! or, oh that, as it flies,  
Snatching me through the pathless air, a storm  
Would whelm me deep in Ocean's restless tide !  
So, when the Gods their parents had destroy'd, 75  
Storms suddenly the beauteous daughters<sup>2</sup> snatch'd

<sup>2</sup> Aëdon, Cleothera, Merope.



Of Pandarus away; them left forlorn  
Venus with curds, with honey and with wine  
Fed duly; Juno gave them to surpass  
All women in the charms of face and mind, 80  
With graceful stature eminent the chaste  
Diana bless'd them, and in works of art  
Illustrious, Pallas taught them to excell.  
But when the foam-sprung Goddess to the skies  
A suitress went on their behalf, to obtain 85  
Blest nuptials for them from the Thunderer Jove,  
(For Jove the happiness, himself, appoints,  
And the unhappiness of all below,)  
Meantime, the Harpies ravishing away  
Those virgins, gave them to the Furies three, 90  
That they might serve them. O that me the Gods  
Inhabiting Olympus so would hide  
From human eyes for ever, or bright-hair'd  
Diana pierce me with a shaft, that while  
Ulysses yet engages all my thoughts, 95  
My days concluded, I might 'scape the pain  
Of gratifying some inferior Chief!  
This is supportable, when (all the day  
To sorrow given) the mourner sleeps at night;  
For sleep, when it hath once the eyelids veil'd, 100  
All reminiscence blots of all alike,  
Both good and ill; but me the Gods afflict  
Not seldom even in dreams, and at my side,  
This night again, one lay resembling him;  
Such as my own Ulysses when he join'd 105  
Achaia's warriors; my exulting heart  
No airy dream believed it, but a truth.

While thus she spake, in orient gold enthroned  
 Came forth the morn ; Ulysses, as she wept,  
 Heard plain her lamentation ; him that sound 110  
 Alarm'd ; he thought her present, and himself  
 Known to her. Gathering hastily the cloak  
 His covering, and the fleeces, them he placed  
 Together on a throne within the hall,  
 But bore the bull's-hide forth into the air. 115  
 Then, lifting high his hands to Jove, he pray'd.

Eternal Sire ! if over moist and dry  
 Ye have with good will sped me to my home  
 After much suffering, grant me from the lips  
 Of some domestic now awake, to hear 120  
 Words of propitious omen, and thyself  
 Vouchsafe me still some other sign abroad.

Such prayer he made, and Jove omniscient heard.  
 Sudden he thunder'd from the radiant heights  
 Olympian ; glad, Ulysses heard the sound. 125  
 A woman, next, a labourer at the mill  
 Hard by, where all the palace-mills were wrought,  
 Gave him the omen of propitious sound.  
 Twelve maidens, day by day, toil'd at the mills,  
 Meal grinding, some of barley, some of wheat, 130  
 Marrow<sup>3</sup> of man. The rest (their portion ground)  
 All slept ; she only from her task as yet  
 Ceased not, for she was feeblest of them all ;  
 She rested on her mill, and thus pronounced  
 The happy omen by her Lord desired. 135

<sup>3</sup> *μυελον ανδρων.*

Jove, Father, Governor of heaven and earth!  
Loud thou hast thunder'd from the starry skies  
By no cloud veil'd; a sign propitious, given  
To whom I know not; but oh grant the prayer  
Of a poor bond-woman! appoint their feast 110  
This day, the last that in Ulysses' house  
The suitors shall enjoy, for whom I drudge,  
With aching heart and trembling knees their meal  
Grinding continual. Feast they here no more!

She ended, and the listening Chief received 115  
With equal joy both signs; for well he hoped  
That he should punish soon those guilty men.  
And now the other maidens in the hall  
Assembling, kindled on the hearth again  
The unwearied blaze; then, godlike from his couch  
Arose Telemachus, and fresh-attired, 121  
Athwart his shoulders his bright faulchion slung,  
Bound his fair sandals to his feet, and took  
His sturdy spear pointed with glittering brass;  
Advancing to the portal, there he stood, 125  
And Euryclea thus, his nurse, bespake.

Nurse! have ye with respectful notice served  
Our guest? or hath he found a sordid couch  
Even where he might? for, prudent though she be,  
My mother, inattentive oft, the worse 130  
Treats kindly, and the better sends away.

Whom Euryclea answer'd thus discrete.  
Blame not, my son! who merits not thy blame.  
The guest sat drinking till he would no more,  
And ate, till, question'd, he replied—Enough. 135

But when the hour of sleep call'd him to rest,  
She gave commandment to her female train  
To spread his couch. Yet he, like one forlorn,  
And through despair, indifferent to himself,  
Both bed and rugs refused, and in the porch 170  
On skins of sheep and on an undress'd hide  
Reposed, where we threw covering over him.

She ceased, and grasping his bright-headed spear,  
Forth went the Prince attended, as he went,  
By his fleet hounds; to the assembled Greeks 175  
In council with majestic gait he moved,  
And Euryclea, daughter wise of Ops,  
Pisenor's son, call'd to the serving-maids.

Haste ye! be diligent! sweep the palace-floor  
And sprinkle it; then give the sumptuous seats 180  
Their purple coverings. Let others cleanse  
With sponges all the tables, wash and rince  
The beakers well, and goblets rich-emboss'd;  
Run others to the fountain, and bring thence  
Water with speed. The suitors will not long 185  
Be absent, but will early come to-day,  
For this day is a public festival<sup>4</sup>.

So she; whom all, obedient, heard; forth went  
Together, twenty to the chrystal fount,  
While in their several provinces the rest 190  
Bestirr'd them brisk at home. Then enter'd all  
The suitors, and began cleaving the wood.  
Meantime, the women from the fountain came,

<sup>4</sup> The new moon.

Whom soon the swine-herd follow'd, driving three  
His fattest brawns; them in the spacious court 195  
He feeding left, and to Ulysses' side  
Approaching, courteously bespake the Chief.

Guest! look the Grecians on thee with respect  
At length, or still disdainful as before?

Then, answer thus Ulysses wise return'd. 200  
Yes—and I would that vengeance from the Gods  
Might pay their insolence, who in a house  
Not theirs, dominion exercise, and plan  
Unseemly projects, shameless as they are!

Thus they conferr'd; and now Melanthius came 205  
The goat-herd, driving, with the aid of two  
His fellow-swains, the fattest of his goats  
To feast the suitors. In the sounding porch  
The goats he tied, then, drawing near, in terms  
Reproachful thus assail'd Ulysses' ear. 210

How, stranger! perseverest thou, begging, still  
To vex the suitors? wilt thou not depart?  
Scarce shall we settle this dispute, I judge,  
Till we have tasted each the other's fist;  
Thou art unreasonable thus to beg 215  
Here always;—have the Greeks no feasts beside?

He spake, to whom Ulysses answer none  
Return'd, but shook his brows, and silent framed  
Terrible purposes. Then, third, approach'd  
Chief o'er the herds, Philœtius; fatted goats 220  
He for the suitors brought, with which he drove  
An heifer; (ferry-men had pass'd them o'er,  
Carriers of all who on their coast arrive;)

He tied them in the sounding porch, then stood  
Beside the swine-herd, to whom thus he said. 225

Who is this guest, Eumæus, here arrived  
So lately? from what nation hath he come?  
What parentage and country boasts the man?  
I pity him, whose figure seems to speak  
Royalty in him. Heaven will surely plunge 230  
The race of common wanderers deep in woe,  
If thus it destine even Kings to mourn.

He ceased; and, with his right hand, drawing nigh,  
Welcomed Ulysses, whom he thus bespake.

Hail venerable guest! and be thy lot 235  
Prosperous at least hereafter, who art held  
At present, in the bonds of numerous ills.  
Thou, Jupiter, of all the Gods, art most  
Severe, and sparest not to inflict distress  
Even on creatures from thyself derived<sup>5</sup>. 240  
I had no sooner mark'd thee, than my eyes  
Swam, and the sweat gush'd from me at the thought  
Of dear Ulysses; for if yet he live  
And see the sun, such tatters, I suppose,  
He wears, a wanderer among human-kind. 245  
But if already with the dead he dwell  
In Pluto's drear abode, oh then, alas  
For kind Ulysses! who consign'd to me,  
While yet a boy, his Cephallenian herds,  
And they have now encreased to such a store 250  
Innumerable of broad-fronted beeves,

<sup>5</sup> He is often called—*πατηρ ἀνδρῶν τε θεῶν τε*.

As only care like mine could have produced.  
These, by command of others, I transport  
For their regale, who neither heed his son,  
Nor tremble at the anger of the Gods, 255  
But long have wish'd ardently to divide  
And share the substance of our absent Lord.  
Me therefore this thought occupies, and haunts  
My mind not seldom ; while the heir survives  
It were no small offence to drive his herds 260  
Afar, and migrate to a foreign land ;  
Yet here to dwell, suffering oppressive wrongs  
While I attend another's beeves, appears  
Still less supportable ; and I had fled,  
And I had served some other mighty Chief 265  
Long since, (for patience fails me to endure  
My present lot,) but that I cherish still  
Some hope of my ill-fated Lord's return,  
To rid his palace of these lawless guests.

To whom Ulysses, ever-wise, replied. 270  
Herdsman ! since neither void of sense thou seem'st,  
Nor yet dishonest, but myself am sure  
That thou art owner of a mind discrete,  
Hear therefore, for I swear ! bold I attest  
Jove and this hospitable board, and these 275  
The Lares <sup>6</sup> of the noble Chief, whose hearth  
Protects me now, that ere thy going hence,  
Ulysses surely shall have reach'd his home,  
And thou shalt see him, if thou wilt, thyself,  
Slaying the suitors who now lord it here. 280

<sup>6</sup> Household Gods who presided over the hearth.

Him answer'd then the keeper of his beeves.  
Oh stranger ! would but the Saturnian King  
Perform that word, thou should'st be taught (thyslf  
Eye-witness of it) what an arm is mine.

Eumæus also every power of heaven 285  
Entreated, that Ulysses might possess  
His home again. Thus mutual they conferr'd.

Meantime, in conference close the suitors plann'd  
Death for Telemachus ; but while they sat  
Consulting, on their left the bird of Jove 290  
An eagle soar'd, grasping a timorous dove.  
Then thus Amphinomus the rest bespake.

Oh friends ! our consultation how to slay  
Telemachus, will never smoothly run  
To its effect ; but let us to the feast. 295

So spake Amphinomus, whose counsel pleased.  
Then, all into the royal house repair'd,  
And on the thrones and couches throwing off  
Their mantles, slew the fatted goats, the brawns,  
The sheep full-sized, and heifer of the herd. 300  
The roasted entrails first they shared, then fill'd  
The beakers, and the swine-herd placed the cups ;  
Philœtius, chief intendant of the beeves,  
Served all with baskets elegant of bread,  
While all their cups Melanthius charged with wine, 305  
And they assail'd at once the ready feast.  
Meantime Telemachus, with forecast shrewd,  
Fast by the marble threshold, but within  
The spacious hall his father placed, to whom  
A sordid seat he gave and scanty board. 310



A portion of the entrails, next, he set  
Before him, fill'd a golden goblet high,  
And thus, in presence of them all, began.

There seated now, drink as the suitors drink.

I will, myself, their biting taunts forbid, 315  
And violence. This edifice is mine,  
Not public property; my father first  
Possess'd it, and my right from him descends.  
Suitors! controul your tongues, nor with your hands  
Offend, lest contest fierce and war ensue. 320

He ceased; they gnawing, sat, their lips aghast  
With wonder that Telemachus in his speech  
Such boldness used. Then spake Eupithes' son,  
Antinoüs, and the assembly thus address'd.

Let pass, ye Greeks! the language of the Prince,  
Harsh as it is, and big with threats to us. 325  
Had Jove permitted, his orations here,  
Although thus eloquent, ere now had ceased.

So spake Antinoüs, whom Ulysses' son  
Heard unconcern'd. And now the heralds came 330  
In solemn pomp, conducting through the streets  
A sacred hecatomb, when in the grove  
Umbrageous of Apollo, King shaft-arm'd,  
The assembled Grecians met. The savoury roast  
Finish'd, and from the spits withdrawn, each shared  
His portion of the noble feast, and such 335  
As they enjoy'd themselves the attendants placed  
Before Ulysses, for the Hero's son  
Himself, Telemachus, had so enjoy'd.  
But Pallas (that they might exasperate more 340

Ulysses) suffer'd not the suitor Chiefs  
To banquet, guiltless of heart-piercing scoffs  
Malign. There was a certain suitor named  
Ctesippus, born in Samos; base of mind  
Was he and profligate, but in the wealth 345  
Confiding of his father, woo'd the wife  
Of long-exiled Ulysses. From his seat  
The haughty suitors thus that man address'd.

Ye noble suitors, I would speak; attend!  
The guest is served; he hath already shared 350  
Equal with us; nor less the laws demand  
Of hospitality; for neither just  
It were nor decent, that a guest, received  
Here by Telemachus, should be denied  
His portion of the feast. Come then—myself 355  
Will give to him, that he may also give  
To her who laved him in the bath, or else  
To whatsoever menial here he will.

So saying, he from a basket near at hand  
Heaved an ox-foot, and with a vigorous arm 360  
Hurl'd it. Ulysses gently bow'd his head,  
Shunning the blow, but gratified his just  
Resentment with a broad sardonic<sup>7</sup> smile  
Of dread significance. He smote the wall.  
Then thus Telemachus rebuked the deed. 365

Ctesippus, thou art fortunate; the bone  
Struck not the stranger, for he shunn'd the blow;  
Else, I had surely thrust my glittering lance

<sup>7</sup> A smile of displeasure.

Right through thee ; then, no hymenæal rites  
 Of thine should have employ'd thy father here,      370  
 But thy funereal. No man therefore treat  
 Me with indignity within these walls,  
 For though of late a child, I can discern  
 Now, and distinguish between good and ill.  
 Suffice it that we patiently endure      375  
 To be spectators daily of our sheep  
 Slaughter'd, our bread consumed, our stores of wine  
 Wasted ; for what can one to all opposed ?  
 Come then—persist no longer in offence  
 And hostile hate of me ; or if ye wish      380  
 To slay me, pause not. It were better far  
 To die, and I had rather much be slain,  
 Than thus to witness your atrocious deeds  
 Day after day ; to see our guests abused,  
 With blows insulted, and the women dragg'd      385  
 With a licentious violence obscene  
 From side to side of all this fair abode.

He said, and all sat silent, till at length  
 Thus Agelaüs spake, Diastor's son.

My friends ! let none with contradiction thwart      390  
 And rude reply, words rational and just ;  
 Assault no more the stranger, nor of all  
 The servants of renown'd Ulysses here  
 Harm any. My advice, both to the Queen  
 And to Telemachus, shall gentle be,      395  
 May it but please them. While the hope survived  
 Within your bosoms of the safe return  
 Of wise Ulysses to his native isle,

So long good reason was that she should use  
Delay, and hold our wooing in suspense ; 400  
For had Ulysses come, that course had proved  
Wisest and best ; but that he comes no more  
Appears now manifest. Thou, therefore, Prince !  
Seeking thy mother, counsel her to wed  
The noblest, and who offers richest dower, 405  
That thou, for thy peculiar, may'st enjoy  
Thy own inheritance in peace and ease,  
And she, departing, find another home.

To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
I swear by Jove, and by my father's woes, 410  
Who either hath deceased far from his home,  
Or lives a wanderer, that I interpose  
No hindrance to her nuptials. Let her wed  
Who offers most, and even whom she will.  
But to dismiss her rudely were a deed 415  
Unfilial.—That I dare not ;—God forbid !

So spake Telemachus. Then Pallas struck  
The suitors with delirium ; wide they stretch'd  
Their jaws with unspontaneous laughter loud ;  
Their meat dripp'd blood ; tears fill'd their eyes, and dire  
Presages of approaching woe, their hearts. 421  
Then thus the prophet Theoclymenus<sup>8</sup>.

Ah miserable men ! what curse is this  
That takes you now ? night wraps itself around  
Your faces, bodies, limbs ; the palace shakes 425  
With peals of groans—and oh, what floods ye weep !

<sup>8</sup> Who had sought refuge in the ship of Telemachus when he left Sparta, and came with him to Ithaca.

I see the walls and arches dappled thick  
With gore ; the vestibule is throng'd, the court  
On all sides throng'd with apparitions grim  
Of slaughter'd men sinking into the gloom 430  
Of Erebus ; the sun is blotted out  
From heaven, and midnight whelms you premature.

He said, they hearing laugh'd ; and thus the son  
Of Polybus, Eurymachus replied. .

This wanderer from a distant shore hath left 435  
His wits behind. Ho there ! conduct him hence  
Into the forum ; since he dreams it night  
Already, teach him there that it is day.

Then answer'd godlike Theoclymenus.  
I have no need, Eurymachus, of guides 440  
To lead me hence, for I have eyes and ears,  
The use of both my feet, and of a mind  
In no respect irrational or wild.  
These shall conduct me forth, for well I know  
That evil threatens you, such too as none 445  
Shall 'scape of all the suitors, whose delight  
Is to insult the unoffending guest  
Received beneath this hospitable roof.

He said, and, issuing from the palace, sought  
Piræus' house, who gladly welcomed him. 450  
Then all the suitors on each other cast  
A look significant, and, to provoke  
Telemachus the more, fleer'd at his guests.  
Of whom a youth thus, insolent, began.

No living wight, Telemachus, had e'er 455  
Guests such as thine. Witness, we know not who,

This hungry vagabond, whose means of life  
Are none, and who hath neither skill nor force  
To earn them, a mere burthen on the ground.  
Witness the other also, who upstarts 460  
A prophet suddenly. 'Take my advice ;  
I counsel wisely ; send them both on board  
Some gallant bark to Sicily for sale ;  
'Thus shall they somewhat profit thee at last.

So spake the suitors, whom Telemachus 465  
Heard unconcern'd, and silent, look'd and look'd  
Toward his father, watching still the time  
When he should punish that licentious throng.  
Meantime, Icarius' daughter, who had placed  
Her splendid seat opposite, heard distinct 470  
Their taunting speeches. 'They, with noisy mirth,  
Feasted deliciously, for they had slain  
Many a fat victim ; but a sadder feast  
Than soon the Goddess and the warrior Chief  
Should furnish for them, none shall ever share, 475  
Of which their crimes had furnish'd first the cause.



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THE ODYSSEY.



BOOK XXI.

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#### ARGUMENT OF THE TWENTY-FIRST BOOK.

Penelope proposes to the suitors a contest with the bow, herself the prize. They prove unable to bend the bow ; when Ulysses having with some difficulty possessed himself of it, manages it with the utmost ease, and dispatches his arrow through twelve rings erected for the trial.

# THE ODYSSEY.

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## BOOK XXI.

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MINERVA now, Goddess cœrulean-eyed,  
Prompted Icarius' daughter, the discrete  
Penelope, with bow and rings to prove  
Her suitors in Ulysses' courts, a game  
Terrible in conclusion to them all. 5  
First, taking in her hand the brazen key  
Well-forged, and fitted with an ivory grasp,  
Attended by the women of her train  
She sought her inmost chamber, the recess  
In which she kept the treasures of her Lord, 10  
His brass, his gold, and steel elaborate.  
Here lay his stubborn bow, and quiver fill'd  
With numerous shafts, a fatal store. That bow  
He had received and quiver from the hand •  
Of godlike Iphitus Eurytides, 15  
Whom, in Messenia<sup>1</sup>, in the house he met  
Of brave Orsilochns. Ulysses came  
Demanding payment of arrearage due

<sup>1</sup> A province of Laconia.

From all that land ; for a Messenian fleet  
Had borne from Ithaca three hundred sheep,                   20  
With all their shepherds ; for which cause, ere yet  
Adult, he voyaged to that distant shore,  
Deputed by his sire, and by the Chiefs  
Of Ithaca, to make the just demand.  
But Iphitus had thither come to seek                               25  
Twelve mares and twelve mule colts which he had lost,  
A search that cost him soon a bloody death.  
For, coming to the house of Hercules  
The valiant task-performing son of Jove,  
He perish'd there, slain by his cruel host                       30  
Who, heedless of heaven's wrath, and of the rights  
Of his own board, first fed, then slaughter'd him ;  
For in *his* house the mares and colts were hidden.  
He, therefore, occupied in that concern,  
Meeting Ulysses there, gave him the bow                       35  
Which, erst, huge Eurytus had borne, and which  
Himself had from his dying sire received.  
Ulysses, in return, on him bestow'd  
A spear and sword, pledges of future love  
And hospitality ; but never more                               40  
They met each other at the friendly board,  
For, ere that hour arrived, the son of Jove  
Slew his own guest, the godlike Iphitus.  
Thus came the bow into Ulysses' hands,  
Which never in his gallant barks he bore                       4  
To battle with him, (though he used it oft  
In times of peace,) but left it safely stored  
At home, a dear memorial of his friend.

Soon as, divinest of her sex, arrived  
At that same chamber, with her foot she press'd 50  
The oaken threshold bright, on which the hand  
Of no mean architect had stretch'd the line,  
Who had erected also on each side  
The posts on which the splendid portal hung,  
She loosed the ring and brace, then introduced 55  
The key, and aiming<sup>2</sup> at them from without,  
Struck back the bolts. The portals, at that stroke,  
Sent forth a tone deep as the pastured bull's,  
And flew wide open. She ascending next  
The elevated floor on which the chests 60  
That held her own fragrant apparel stood,  
With lifted hand aloft took down the bow  
In its embroider'd bow-case safe enclosed.  
Then sitting there, she lay'd it on her knees,  
Weeping aloud, and drew it from the case. 65  
Thus weeping over it long time she sat,  
Till satiate, at the last, with grief and tears,  
Descending by the palace steps she sought  
Again the haughty suitors, with the bow  
Elastic, and the quiver in her hand 70  
Replete with pointed shafts, a deadly store.  
Her maidens, as she went, bore after her  
A coffer fill'd with prizes by her Lord,  
Much brass and steel ; and when at length she came,

<sup>2</sup> The reader will of course observe, that the whole of this process implies a sort of mechanism very different from that with which we are acquainted.—The translation, I believe, is exact.

Loveliest of women, where the suitors sat, 75  
Between the pillars of the stately dome  
Pausing, before her beauteous face she held  
Her lucid veil, and by two matrons chaste  
Supported, the assembly thus address'd.

Ye noble suitors, hear, who rudely haunt 80  
This palace of a Chief long absent hence,  
Whose substance ye have now long time consumed,  
Nor palliative have yet contrived, or could,  
Save your ambition to make me a bride,—  
Attend this game to which I call you forth. 85  
Now, suitors! prove yourselves with this huge bow  
Of wide-renown'd Ulysses; he who draws  
Easiest the bow, and who his arrow sends  
Through twice six rings, he takes me to his home,  
And I must leave this mansion of my youth 90  
Plenteous, magnificent, which doubtless oft  
I shall remember even in my dreams.

So saying, she bade Eumæus lay the bow  
Before them, and the twice six rings of steel.  
He wept, received them, and obey'd; nor wept 95  
The herdsman less, seeing the bow which erst  
His Lord had occupied; when at their tears  
Indignant, thus, Antinoüs began.

Ye rural drones, whose purblind eyes see not  
Beyond the present hour, egregious fools! 100  
Why weeping trouble ye the Queen, too much  
Before afflicted for her husband lost?  
Either partake the banquet silently,  
Or else go weep abroad, leaving the bow,

That stubborn test, to us ; for none, I judge, 105  
None here shall bend this polish'd bow with ease,  
Since in this whole assembly I discern  
None like Ulysses, whom myself have seen  
And recollect, though I was then a boy.

He said, but in his heart meantime the hope 110  
Cherish'd, that he should bend, himself, the bow,  
And pass the rings ; yet was he destined first  
Of all that company to taste the steel  
Of brave Ulysses' shaft, whom in that house  
He had so oft dishonour'd, and had urged 115  
So oft all others to the like offence.

Amidst them then the sacred might arose  
Of young Telemachus, who thus began.

Saturnian Jove questionless hath deprived  
Me of all reason. My own mother, famed 120  
For wisdom as she is, makes known to all  
Her purpose to abandon this abode  
And follow a new mate, while heedless I  
Trifle and laugh as I were still a child.  
But come, ye suitors ! since the prize is such, 125  
A woman, like to whom none can be found  
This day in all Achaia ; on the shores  
Of sacred Pylus ; in the cities proud  
Of Argos or Mycenæ ; or even here  
In Ithaca ; or yet within the walls 130  
Of black Epirus ; and since this yourselves  
Know also, wherefore should I speak her praise ?  
Come then, delay not, waste not time in vain  
Excuses, turn not from the proof, but bend

The bow, that thus the issue may be known. 135  
I also will, myself, that task essay ;  
And should I bend the bow, and pass the rings,  
Then shall not my illustrious mother leave  
Her son forlorn, forsaking this abode  
To follow a new spouse, while I remain 140  
Disconsolate, although of age to bear,  
Successful as my sire, the prize away.

So saying, he started from his seat, cast off  
His purple cloak, and lay'd his sword aside,  
Then fix'd, himself, the rings, furrowing the earth 145  
By line, and opening one long trench for all,  
And stamping close the glebe. Amazement seized  
All present, seeing with how prompt a skill  
He executed, though untaught, his task.  
Then hasting to the portal, there he stood. 150  
Thrice, struggling, he essay'd to bend the bow,  
And thrice desisted, hoping still to draw  
The bow-string<sup>3</sup> home, and shoot through all the rings.  
And now the fourth time striving with full force  
He had prevail'd to string it, but his sire 155  
Forbad his eager efforts by a sign.  
Then thus the royal youth to all around.

Gods! either I shall prove of little force  
Hereafter, and for manly feats unapt,  
Or I am yet too young, and have not strength 160

<sup>3</sup> This first attempt of Telemachus and the suitors was not an attempt to shoot, but to lodge the bow-string on the opposite horn, the bow having been released at one end, and slackened while it was laid by.

To quell the aggressor's contumely. But come—  
(For ye have strength surpassing mine,) try ye  
The bow, and bring this contest to an end.

He ceased, and set the bow down on the floor,  
Reclining it against the pannels smooth 165  
That lined the wall; the arrow next he placed,  
Leaning against the bow's bright-polish'd horn,  
And to the seat, whence he had risen, return'd.  
Then thus Eupithes' son, Antinoüs spake.

My friends! come forth successive from the right<sup>4</sup>,  
Where he who ministers the cup begins. 171

So spake Antinoüs, and his counsel pleased.  
Then, first, Leiodes, C'enop's son, arose.  
He was their soothsayer, and ever sat  
Beside the beaker, inmost of them all. 175  
To him alone of all, licentious deeds  
Were odious, and with indignation fired,  
He witness'd the excesses of the rest.  
He then took foremost up the shaft and bow,  
And, station'd at the portal, strove to bend 180  
But bent it not, fatiguing, first, his hands  
Delicate and uncustom'd to the toil.  
He ceased, and the assembly thus bespake.

My friends, I speed not; let another try;  
For many Princes shall this bow of life 185  
Bereave, since death more eligible seems,  
Far more, than loss of her, for whom we meet

<sup>4</sup> Antinoüs prescribes to them this manner of rising to the trial for the good omen's sake, the left hand being held unpropitious.



Continual here, expecting still the prize.  
Some suitor haply at this moment, hopes  
That he shall wed whom long he hath desired, 190  
Ulysses' wife, Penelope ; let him  
Essay the bow, and trial made, address  
His spousal offers to some other fair  
Among the long-stoled Princesses of Greece,  
This Princess leaving his, whose proffer'd gifts 195  
Shall please her most, and whom the Fates ordain.

He said, and set the bow down on the floor,  
Reclining it against the pannels smooth  
That lined the wall ; the arrow, next, he placed,  
Leaning against the bow's bright-polish'd horn, 200  
And to the seat whence he had risen return'd.  
Then him Antinoüs, angry, thus reproved.

What word, Leiodes, grating to our ears  
Hath 'scaped thy lips ? I hear it with disdain.  
Shall this bow fatal prove to many a Prince, 205  
Because thou hast thyself too feeble proved  
To bend it ? no. Thou wast not born to bend  
The unpliant bow, or to direct the shaft,  
But here are nobler who shall soon prevail.

He said, and to Melanthius gave command, 210  
The goat-herd. Hence, Melanthius, kindle fire ;  
Beside it place, with fleeces spread, a form  
Of length commodious ; from within procure  
A large round cake of suet next, with which  
When we have chafed and suppld the tough bow 215  
Before the fire, we will again essay  
To bend it, and decide the doubtful strife.

He ended, and Melanthius, kindling fire,  
Beside it placed, with fleeces spread, a form  
Of length commodious ; next he brought a cake 220  
Ample and round of suet from within,  
With which they chafed the bow, then tried again  
To bend, but bent it not ; superior strength  
To theirs that task required. Yet two, the rest  
In force surpassing, made no trial yet, 225  
Antinoüs, and Eurymachus the brave.

Then went the herdsman and the swine-herd forth  
Together ; after whom, the glorious Chief  
Himself the house left also, and when all  
Without the court had met, with gentle speech 230  
Ulysses, then the faithful pair address'd.

Herdsman ! and thou, Eumæus ! shall I keep  
A certain secret close, or shall I speak  
Outright ? my spirit prompts me, and I will.  
What welcome should Ulysses at your hands 235  
Receive, arriving suddenly at home,  
Some God his guide ? would ye the suitors aid,  
Or would ye aid Ulysses ? answer true.

Then thus the chief intendant of his herds.  
Would Jove but grant me my desire, to see 240  
Once more the Hero, and would some kind Power  
Restore him, I would show thee soon an arm  
Strenuous to serve him, and a dauntless heart.

Eumæus also fervently implored  
The Gods in prayer, that they would render back 245  
Ulysses to his home. He then convinced  
Of their unfeigning honesty, began.

Behold him ! I am he myself, arrived  
After long sufferings in the twentieth year !  
I know how welcome to yourselves alone 250  
Of all my train I come, for I have heard  
None others praying for my safe return.  
I therefore tell you truth ; should heaven subdue  
The suitors under me, ye shall receive  
Each at my hands a bride, with lands and house 255  
Near to my own, and ye shall be thenceforth  
Dear friends and brothers of the Prince my son.  
Lo ! also this indisputable proof  
That ye may know and trust me. View it here.  
It is the scar which in Parnassus erst 260  
(Where with the sons I hunted of renown'd  
Autolycus,) I from a boar received.

So saying, he stripp'd his tatters, and unveil'd  
The whole broad scar ; then soon as they had seen  
And surely recognized the mark, each cast 265  
His arms around Ulysses, wept, embraced  
And press'd him to his bosom, kissing oft  
His brows and shoulders, who as oft their hands  
And foreheads kiss'd, nor had the setting sun  
Beheld them satisfied, but that himself 270  
Ulysses thus admonished them, and said.

Cease now from tears, lest any, coming forth,  
Mark and report them to our foes within.  
Now to the hall again, but one by one,  
Not all at once, I foremost, then yourselves, 275  
And this shall be the sign. Full well I know  
That all unanimous, they will oppose

Delivery of the bow and shafts to me ;  
 But thou, (proceeding with it to my seat)  
 Eumæus, noble friend ! shalt give the bow 280  
 Into my grasp ; then bid the women close  
 The massy doors, and should they hear a groan  
 Or other noise made by the Princes shut  
 Within the hall, let none set step abroad,  
 But all work silent. Be the palace-door 285  
 Thy charge, my good Philœtius ! key it fast  
 Without a moment's pause, and fix the brace<sup>5</sup>.

He ended, and returning to the hall,  
 Resumed his seat ; nor stay'd his servants long  
 Without, but follow'd their illustrious Lord. 290  
 Eurymachus was busily employ'd  
 Turning the bow, and chafing it before  
 The sprightly blaze, but after all could find  
 No power to bend it. Disappointment wrung  
 A groan from his proud heart, and thus he said. 295

Alas ! not only for myself I grieve,  
 But grieve for all. Nor though I mourn the loss  
 Of such a bride, mourn I that loss alone,  
 (For lovely Greccians may be found no few  
 In Ithaca, and in the neighbour isles,) 300  
 But should we so inferior prove at last  
 To brave Ulysses, that no force of ours  
 Can bend his bow, we are for ever shamed.

To whom Antinoüs, thus, Eupithes' son.

<sup>5</sup> The *ἀεσμός* seems to have been a strap designed to close the only aperture by which the bolt could be displaced, and the door opened.



If I retain it still in like degree 335  
As erst, or whether wandering and defect  
Of nourishment have worn it all away.

He said, whom they with indignation heard  
Extreme, alarm'd lest he should bend the bow,  
And sternly thus Antinoüs replied. 340

Desperate vagabond! ah wretch deprived  
Of reason utterly! art not content?  
Esteem'st it not distinction proud enough  
To feast with us the nobles of the land?  
None robs thee of thy share, thou witnessest 345  
Our whole discourse, which, save thyself alone,  
No needy vagrant is allow'd to hear.

Thou art befool'd by wine, as many have been,  
Wide-throated drinkers, unrestrain'd by rule.  
Wine in the mansion of the mighty Chief 350  
Pirithoüs, made the valiant Centaur mad  
Eurytion, at the Lapithæan<sup>6</sup> feast.

He drank to drunkenness, and being drunk,  
Committed great enormities beneath  
Pirithoüs' roof, and such as fill'd with rage 355  
The Hero-guests, who therefore by his feet  
Dragg'd him right through the vestibule, amerc'd  
Of nose and ears, and he departed thence  
Provoked to frenzy by that foul disgrace,

<sup>6</sup> When Pirithoüs, one of the Lapithæ, married Hippodamia, daughter of Adrastus, he invited the Centaurs to the wedding. The Centaurs, intoxicated with wine, attempted to ravish the wives of the Lapithæ, who, in resentment of that insult, slew them.

Whence war between the human kind arose 360  
And the bold Centaurs—but he first incurred  
By his ebriety that mulct severe.

Great evil also if thou bend the bow,  
To thee I prophecy ; for thou shalt find  
Advocate or protector none in all 365

This people, but we will dispatch thee hence  
Incontinent on board a sable bark  
To Echetus, the scourge of human kind,  
From whom is no escape. Drink then in peace,  
And contest shun with younger men than thou. 370

Ilim answer'd then Penelope discrete.  
Antinoüs ! neither seemly were the deed  
Nor just, to maim or harm whatever guest  
Whom here arrived Telemachus receives.  
Canst thou expect, that should he even prove 375  
Stronger than ye, and bend the massy bow,  
He will conduct me hence to his own home,  
And make me his own bride ? No such design  
His heart conceives, or hope ; nor let a dread  
So vain the mind of any overcloud 380  
Who banquets here, since it dishonours me.

So she ; to whom Eurymachus reply'd,  
Offspring of Polybus. O matchless Queen !  
Icarius' prudent daughter ! none suspects  
That thou wilt wed with him ; a mate so mean 385  
Should ill become thee ; but we fear the tongues  
Of either sex, lest some Achaian say  
Hereafter, (one inferior far to us)  
Ah ! how unworthy are they to compare

With him whose wife they seek ! to bend his bow 390  
Pass'd all their power, yet this poor vagabond,  
Arriving from what country none can tell,  
Bent it with ease, and shot through all the rings.  
So will they speak, and so shall we be shamed.

Then answer thus Penelope return'd. 395  
No fair report, Eurymachus, attends  
Their names or can, who, riotous as ye,  
The house dishonour and consume the wealth  
Of such a Chief. Why shame ye thus *yourselves* ?  
The guest is of athletic frame, well form'd, 400  
And large of limb ! he boasts him also sprung  
From noble ancestry. Come then—consent—  
Give him the bow, that we may see the proof ;  
For thus I say, and thus will I perform ;  
Sure as he bends it, and Apollo gives 405  
To him that glory, tunic fair and cloak  
Shall be his meed from me, a javelin keen  
To guard him against men and dogs, a sword  
Of double edge, and sandals for his feet,  
And I will send him whither most he would. 410

Her answer'd then prudent Telemachus.  
Mother—the bow is mine ; and save myself,  
No Greek hath right to give it, or refuse.  
None who in rock-bound Ithaca possess  
Dominion, none in the steed-pastured isles 415  
Of Elis, if I chose to make the bow  
His own for ever, should that choice controul.  
But thou into the house repairing, ply  
Spindle and loom, thy province, and enjoin



Diligence to thy maidens ; for the bow 420  
Is man's concern alone, and shall be mine  
Especially, since I am master here.

She heard astonish'd, and the prudent speech  
Reposing of her son deep in her heart,  
Withdrew ; then mounting with her female train 425  
To her superior chamber, there she wept  
Her lost Ulysses, till Minerva bathed  
With balmy dews of sleep her weary lids.  
And now the noble swine-herd bore the bow  
Toward Ulysses, but with one voice all 430  
The suitors, clamorous, reproved the deed,  
Of whom a youth thus insolent exclaim'd.

Thou clumsy swine-herd, whither bear'st the bow,  
Delirious wretch ? the hounds that thou hast train'd  
Shall eat thee at thy solitary home 435  
Ere long, let but Apollo prove, at last,  
Propitious to us, and the Powers of heaven.

So they, whom hearing he replaced the bow  
Where erst he stood, terrified at the sound  
Of such loud menaces ; on the other side 440  
Telemachus as loud assail'd his ear.

Friend ! forward with the bow ; or soon repent  
That thou obey'dst the many. I will else  
With huge stones drive thee, younger as I am,  
Back to the field. My strength surpasses thine. 445  
I would to heaven that I in force excell'd  
As far, and prowess, every suitor here !  
So would I soon give rude dismissal hence  
To some, who live but to imagine harm.

He ceased, whose words the suitors laughing heard,  
And for their sake, in part their wrath resign'd 451  
Against Telemachus ; then through the hall  
Eumæus bore, and to Ulysses' hand  
Consign'd the bow ; next summoning abroad  
The ancient nurse, he gave her thus in charge. 455

It is the pleasure of Telemachus,  
Sage Euryclea ! that thou key secure  
The doors ; and should ye hear perchance a groan  
Or other noise made by the Princes shut  
Within the hall, let none look curious forth, 460  
But each in quietness pursue her work.

So he ; nor flew his words useless away,  
But she incontinent shut fast the doors.  
Then noiseless sprang Philætiüs forth, who closed  
The portals also of the palace-court. 465  
A ship-rope of Ægyptian reed, it chanced,  
Lay in the vestibule ; with that he braced  
The doors securely, and re-entering fill'd  
Again his seat, but watchful eyed his Lord.  
He now assaying with his hand the bow, 470  
Made curious trial of it every way,  
And turn'd it on all sides, lest haply worms  
Had in its master's absence drill'd the horn.  
Then thus a suitor to his next remark'd.

He hath an eye methinks exactly skill'd 475  
In bows, and steals them ; or perhaps at home  
Hath such himself, or feels a strong desire  
To make them ; so inquisitive the rogue  
Adept in mischief, shifts it to and fro !

To whom another insolent replied. 480  
I wish him like prosperity in all  
His efforts, as attends his effort made  
On this same bow, which he shall never bend.

So they ; but when the wary Hero wise  
Had made his hand familiar with the bow 485  
Poising it and examining—at once—

As when in harp and song adept, a bard  
Unlabouring strains the chord to a new lyre,  
The twisted entrails of a sheep below  
With fingers nice inserting, and above, 490  
With such facility Ulysses bent

His own huge bow, and with his right hand play'd  
The nerve, which, in its quick vibration sang  
Clear as the swallow's voice. Keen anguish seized  
The suitors, wan grew every cheek, and Jove 495  
Gave him his rolling thunder for a sign.

That omen, granted to him by the son  
Of wily Saturn, with delight he heard.  
He took a shaft that at the table side

Lay ready drawn ; but in his quiver's womb 500  
The rest yet slept, by those Achaians proud  
To be, ere long, experienced. True he lodged  
The arrow on the centre of the bow,

And, occupying still his seat, drew home  
Nerve and notch'd arrow-head ; with steadfast sight  
He aim'd and sent it ; right through all the rings 506  
From first to last the steel-charged weapon flew  
Issuing beyond, and to his son he spake.

Thou need'st not blush, young Prince, to have received

A guest like me ; neither my arrow swerved,      510  
Nor labour'd I long time to draw the bow ;  
My strength is unimpair'd, not such as these  
In scorn affirm it. But the waning day  
Calls us to supper, <sup>7</sup>after which succeeds  
Jocund variety, the song, the harp,      515  
With all that heightens and adorns the feast.

He said, and with his brows gave him the sign.  
At once the son of the illustrious Chief  
Slung his keen faulchion, grasp'd his spear, and stood  
Arm'd bright for battle at his father's side.      520

<sup>7</sup> This is an instance of the *Σαρδανιον μαλα τοιον* mentioned in Book XX. ; such as, perhaps, could not be easily paralleled. I question if there be a passage, either in ancient or modern tragedy, so truly terrible as this seeming levity of Ulysses, in the moment when he was going to begin the slaughter.



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# THE ODYSSEY.



BOOK XXII.

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#### ARGUMENT OF THE TWENTY-SECOND BOOK.

Ulysses, with some little assistance from Telemachus, Eumæus, and Philœtius, slays all the suitors, and twelve of the female servants who had allowed themselves in illicit intercourse with them, are hanged. Melanthius also is punished with miserable mutilation.

## THE ODYSSEY.

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### BOOK XXII.

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THEN, girding up his rags, Ulysses sprang  
With bow and full-charged quiver to the door;  
Loose on the broad stone at his feet he pour'd  
His arrows, and the suitors thus bespake.

This prize, though difficult, hath been atchieved. 5  
Now for another mark which never man  
Struck yet, but I will strike it if I may,  
And if Apollo make that glory mine.

He said, and at Antinöus aimed direct  
A bitter shaft; he, purposing to drink, 10  
Both hands advanced toward the golden cup  
Twin-car'd, nor aught suspected death so nigh.  
For who, at the full banquet, could suspect  
That any single guest, however brave,  
Should plan his death, and execute the blow? 15  
Yet him Ulysses with an arrow pierc'd  
Full in the throat, and through his neck behind  
Started the glittering point. Aslant he droop'd;



Down fell the goblet, through his nostrils flew  
The spouted blood, and spurning with his foot 20  
The board, he spread his viands in the dust.  
Confusion, when they saw Antinoüs fall'n,  
Seized all the suitors ; from the thrones they sprang,  
Flew every way, and on all sides explored  
The palace-walls, but neither sturdy lance 25  
As erst, nor buckler could they there discern.  
Then, furious, to Ulysses thus they spake.

Thy arrow, stranger, was ill-aim'd ; a man  
Is no just mark. Thou never shalt dispute  
' Prize more. Inevitable death is thine. 30  
For thou hast slain a Prince noblest of all  
In Ithaca, and shalt be vultures' food.

Various their judgments were, but none believed  
That he had slain him wittingly, nor saw  
The infatuate men fate hovering o'er them all. 35  
Then thus Ulysses, louting dark, replied.

O dogs ! not fearing aught my safe return  
From Ilium, ye have shorn my substance close,  
Lain with my women forcibly, and sought,  
While yet I lived, to make my consort yours, 40  
Heedless of the inhabitants of heaven  
Alike, and of the just revenge of man.  
But death is on the wing ; death for you all.

He said ; their cheeks all faded at the sound,  
And each with sharpen'd eyes search'd every nook 45  
For an escape from his impending doom,  
Till thus, alone, Eurymachus replied.

If thou indeed art he, the mighty Chief

Of Ithaca return'd, thou hast rehearsed  
With truth the crimes committed by the Greeks 50  
Frequent, both in thy house and in thy field.  
But he, already, who was cause of all,  
Lies slain, Antinoüs ; he thy palace fill'd  
With outrage, not solicitous so much  
To win the fair Penelope, but thoughts 55  
Far different framing, which Saturnian Jove  
Hath baffled all ; to rule himself supreme  
In noble Ithaca, when he had kill'd  
By an insidious stratagem thy son.  
But he is slain. Now therefore, spare thy own, 60  
Thy people ; public reparation due  
Shall sure be thine, and to appease thy wrath  
For all the waste that, eating, drinking here  
We have committed, we will yield thee, each,  
Full twenty beeves, gold paying thee beside 65  
And brass, till joy shall fill thee at the sight,  
However just thine anger was before.

To whom Ulysses, frowning stern, replied.  
Eurymachus, would ye contribute each  
His whole inheritance, and other sums 70  
Still add beside, ye should not, even so,  
These hands of mine bribe to abstain from blood,  
Till every suitor suffer for his wrong.  
Ye have your choice. Fight with me, or escape  
(Whoever may) the terrours of his fate, 75  
But ye all perish, if my thought be true.

He ended, they with trembling knees and hearts  
All heard, whom thus Eurymachus address'd.

To your defence, my friends ! for respite none  
Will he to his victorious hands afford, 80  
But arm'd with bow and quiver, will dispatch  
Shafts from the door till he have slain us all.  
Therefore to arms—draw each his sword—oppose  
The tables to his shafts, and all at once  
Rush on him ; that dislodging him at least 85  
From portal and from threshold, we may give  
The city on all sides a loud alarm,  
So shall this archer soon have shot his last.

Thus saying, he drew his brazen faulchion keen  
Of double edge, and with a dreadful cry 90  
Sprang on him ; but Ulysses with a shaft  
In that same moment through his bosom driven  
Transfix'd his liver, and down dropp'd his sword.  
He, staggering around his table, fell  
Convolved in agonies, and overturn'd 95  
Both food and wine ; his forehead smote the floor ;  
Woe fill'd his heart, and spurning with his heels  
His vacant seat, he shook it till he died.  
Then with his faulchion drawn, Amphinomus  
Advanced to drive Ulysses from the door, 100  
And fierce was his assault ; but, from behind,  
Telemachus between his shoulders fix'd  
A brazen lance, and urged it through his breast.  
Full on his front, with hideous sound, he fell.  
Leaving the weapon planted in his spine 105  
Back flew Telemachus, lest had he stood  
Drawing it forth, some enemy, perchance,  
Should either pierce him with a sudden thrust

Oblique, or hew him with a downright edge.  
Swift, therefore, to his father's side he ran, 110  
Whom reaching, in wing'd accents thus he said.

My father! I will now bring thee a shield,  
An helmet, and two spears: I will enclose  
Myself in armour also, and will give  
Both to the herdsmen and Eumæus arms 115  
Expedient now, and needful for us all.

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied.  
Run; fetch them, while I yet have arrows left,  
Lest, single, I be justled from the door.

He said, and at his word, forth went the Prince, 120  
Seeking the chamber where he had secured  
The armour. Thence he took four shields, eight spears,  
With four hair-crested helmets, charged with which  
He hasted to his father's side again,  
And, arming first himself, furnish'd with arms 125  
His two attendants. Then, all clad alike  
In splendid brass, beside the dauntless Chief  
Ulysses, his auxiliars firm they stood.

He while a single arrow unemploy'd  
Lay at his foot, right-aiming, ever pierced 130  
Some suitor through, and heaps on heaps they fell.  
But when his arrows fail'd the royal Chief,  
His bow reclining at the portal's side  
Against the palace-wall, he slung himself  
A four-fold buckler on his arm, he fix'd 135  
A casque whose crest waved awful o'er his brows  
On his illustrious head, and fill'd his gripe  
With two stout spears, well-headed both with brass.

'There was a certain postern<sup>1</sup> in the wall  
 At the gate-side, the customary pass 140  
 Into a narrow street, but barr'd secure.  
 Ulysses bade his faithful swine-herd watch  
 That egress, station'd near it, for it own'd  
 One sole approach ; then Agelaüs loud  
 Exhorting all the suitors, thus exclaim'd. 145

Oh friends ! will none, ascending to the door  
 Of yonder postern, summon to our aid  
 The populace, and spread a wide alarm ?  
 So shall this archer soon have shot his last.

'To whom the keeper of the goats replied 150  
 Melanthius. Agelaüs ! Prince renown'd !  
 That may not be. The postern and the gate<sup>2</sup>  
 Neighbour too near each other, and to force  
 The narrow egress were a vain attempt ;  
 One valiant man might thence repulse us all. 155  
 But come—myself will furnish you with arms  
 Fetch'd from above ; for there, as I suppose,  
 (And not elsewhere) Ulysses, and his son  
 Have hidden them, and there they shall be found.

So spake Melanthius, and ascending sought 160

<sup>1</sup> If the ancients found it difficult to ascertain clearly the situation of this *ποσθοῦρη*, well may we. The Translator has given it the position which to him appeared most probable.—There seem to have been two of these posterns, one leading to a part from which the town might be alarmed, the other to the chamber to which Telemachus went for armour. There was one, perhaps, on each side of the portal, and they appear to have been at some height above the floor.

<sup>2</sup> At which Ulysses stood.

Ulysses' chambers through the winding stairs  
And galleries of the house. Twelve bucklers thence  
He took, as many spears, and helmets bright  
As many, shagg'd with hair, then swift return'd  
And gave them to his friends. Trembled the heart  
Of brave Ulysses, and his knees, at sight 166  
Of his opposers putting armour on,  
And shaking each his spear; arduous indeed  
Now seem'd his task, and in wing'd accents brief  
Thus to his son Telemachus he spake. 170

Either some woman of our train contrives  
Hard battle for us, furnishing with arms  
The suitors, or Melanthius arms them all.

Him answer'd then Telemachus discrete.  
Father, this fault was mine, and be it charged 175  
On none beside; I left the chamber-door  
Unbarr'd, which, more attentive than myself,  
Their spy perceived. But haste, Eumæus, shut  
The chamber-door, observing well, the while,  
If any woman of our train have done 180  
This deed, or whether, as I more suspect,  
Melanthius, Dolius' son, have given them arms.

Thus mutual they conferr'd; meantime, again  
Melanthius to the chamber flew in quest  
Of other arms. Eumæus, as he went, 185  
Mark'd him, and to Ulysses thus he spake.

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd!  
Behold, the traitor, whom ourselves supposed,  
Seeks yet again the chamber! Tell me plain,  
Shall I, should I superior prove in force, 190

Slay him, or shall I drag him thence to thee,  
That he may suffer at thy hands the doom  
Due to his treasons perpetrated oft  
Against thee, here, even in thy own house?

Then answer thus Ulysses shrewd return'd. 195  
I, with Telemachus, will here immew  
The lordly suitors close, rage as they may.  
Ye two, the while, bind fast Melanthius' hands  
And feet behind his back, then cast him bound  
Into the chamber, and (the door secured) 200  
Pass underneath his arms a double chain,  
And by a pillar's top weigh him aloft  
Till he approach the rafters, there to endure,  
Living long time, the miseries he hath earn'd.

He spake; they prompt obey'd; together both 205  
They sought the chamber, whom the wretch within  
Heard not, exploring every nook for arms.  
They watching stood the door, from which, at length,  
Forth came Melanthius, bearing in one hand  
A casque, and in the other a broad shield 210  
Time-worn and chapp'd with drought, which in his  
youth

Warlike Laertes had been wont to bear.  
Long time neglected it had lain, till age  
Had loosed the sutures of its bands. At once  
Both springing on him, seized and drew him in 215  
Forcibly by his locks, then cast him down  
Prone on the pavement, trembling at his fate.  
With painful stricture of the cord his hands  
They bound and feet together at his back,

As their illustrious master had enjoin'd, 220  
Then weigh'd him with a double chain aloft,  
By a tall pillar to the palace-roof,  
And thus, deriding him, Eumæus spake.

Now, good Melanthius, on that fleecy bed  
Reclined, as well befits thee, thou wilt watch 225  
All night, nor when the golden dawn forsakes  
The ocean stream, will she escape thine eye,  
But thou wilt duly to the palace drive  
The fattest goats, a banquet for thy friends.

So saying, he left him in his dreadful sling. 230  
Then arming both, and barring fast the door,  
They sought brave Laertiades again.

And now, courageous at the portal stood  
Those four, by numbers in the interior house  
Opposed of adversaries fierce in arms, 235  
When Pallas, in the form and with the voice  
Approach'd of Mentor, whom Laertes' son  
Beheld, and joyful at the sight, exclaim'd.

Help, Mentor ! help—now recollect a friend  
And benefactor, born when thou wast born. 240

So he, not unsuspecting that he saw  
Pallas, the heroine of heaven. Meantime  
The suitors fill'd with menaces the dome,  
And Agelaüs first, Damastor's son,  
In accents harsh rebuked the Goddess thus. 245

Beware, oh Mentor ! that he lure thee not  
To oppose the suitors and to aid himself,  
For thus will we. Ulysses and his son  
Both slain, in vengeance of thy purposed deeds



Against us, we will slay *thee* next, and thou 250  
With thy own head shalt satisfy the wrong.  
Your force thus quell'd in battle, all thy wealth  
Whether in house or field, mingled with his,  
We will confiscate, neither will we leave  
Or son of thine, or daughter in thy house 255  
Alive, nor shall thy virtuous consort more  
Within the walls of Ithaca be seen.

He ended, and his words with wrath inflamed  
Minerva's heart the more ; incensed, she turn'd  
Toward Ulysses, whom she thus reproved. 260

Thou neither own'st the courage nor the force,  
Ulysses now, which nine whole years thou showd'st  
At Ilium, waging battle obstinate  
For high-born Helen, and in horrid fight  
Destroying multitudes, till thy advice 265  
At last lay'd Priam's bulwark'd city low.  
Why, in possession of thy proper home  
And substance, mourn'st thou want of power to oppose  
The suitors ? Stand beside me, mark my deeds,  
And thou shalt own Mentor Alcimides 270  
A valiant friend, and mindful of thy love.

She spake ; nor made she victory as yet  
Entire his own, proving the valour, first,  
Both of the sire and of his glorious son,  
But, springing in a swallow's form aloft, 275  
Perch'd on a rafter of the splendid roof.  
Then, Agelaüs animated loud  
The suitors, whom Eurynomus also roused,  
Amphimedon, and Demoptolemus,

And Polyctorides, Pisander named, 280  
And Polybus the brave; for noblest far  
Of all the suitor chiefs who now survived  
And fought for life were these. The bow had quell'd  
And shafts, in quick succession sent, the rest.

Then Agelaüs thus harangued them all. 285

We soon shall tame, O friends, this warrior's might,  
Whom Mentor, after all his airy vaunts  
Hath left, and at the portal now remain  
Themselves alone. Dismiss not therefore, all,  
Your spears together, but with six alone 290  
Assail them first; Jove willing, we shall pierce  
Ulysses, and subduing him, shall slay  
With ease the rest; their force is safely scorn'd.

He ceased; and, as he bade, six hurl'd the spear  
Together; but Minerva gave them all 295  
A devious flight; <sup>3</sup>one struck a column, one  
The planks of the broad portal, and a third  
Flung right his ashen beam ponderous with brass  
Against the wall. Then (every suitor's spear  
Eluded) thus Ulysses gave the word— 300

Now friends! I counsel you that ye dismiss  
Your spears at *them*, who not content with vast  
Enormities, thirst also for our blood.

He said, and with unerring aim all threw  
Their glittering spears. Ulysses on the ground 305  
Stretch'd Demoptolemus; Euryades  
Fell by Telemachus; the swine-herd slew  
Elätus, and the keeper of the beeves

<sup>3</sup> The deviation of three only is described, which must be understood, therefore, as instances of the ill success of all.

Pisander ; in one moment all alike  
Lay grinding with their teeth the dusty floor. 310  
Back flew the suitors to the farthest wall,  
On whom those valiant four advancing, each  
Recover'd quick his weapon from the dead.  
Then hurl'd the desperate suitors yet again  
Their glittering spears, but Pallas gave to each 315  
A frustrate course ; one struck a column, one  
The planks of the broad portal, and a third  
Flung full his ashen beam against the wall.  
Yet pierced Amphimedon the Prince's wrist,  
But slightly, a skin-wound, and o'er his shield 320  
Ctesippus reach'd the shoulder of the good  
Eumæus, but his glancing weapon swift  
O'erflew the mark, and fell. And now the four,  
Ulysses, dauntless Hero, and his friends  
All hurl'd their spears together in return. 325  
Himself Ulysses, city-waster Chief,  
Wounded Eurydamas ; Ulysses' son  
Amphimedon ; the swine-herd Polybus ;  
And in his breast the keeper of the beeves  
Ctesippus, glorying over whom, he cried. 330

Oh son of Polytherses ! whose delight  
Hath been to taunt and jeer, never again  
Boast foolishly, but to the Gods commit  
Thy tongue, since they are mightier far than thou.  
Take this—a compensation for thy pledge 335  
Of hospitality, the huge ox-hoof,  
Which while he roam'd the palace, begging alms,  
Ulysses at thy bounteous hand received.

So gloried he ; then grasping still his spear,

Ulysses pierced Damastor's son, and next 340  
 Telemachus, enforcing his long beam  
 Sheer through his bowels and his back, transpierced  
 Leiocritus ; he prostrate smote the floor.  
 Then Pallas from the lofty roof held forth  
 Her host-confounding *Ægis* o'er their heads, 345  
 Withering their souls with fear. They through the hall  
 Fled, scatter'd as an herd, which rapid-wing'd  
 The gad-fly dissipates, infester fell  
 Of beeves, when vernal suns shine hot and long.  
 ' But, as when bow-beak'd vultures crooked-claw'd 350  
 Stoop from the mountains on the smaller fowl ;  
 Terrified at the toils that spread the plain  
 The flock takes wing, they, darting from above,  
 Strike, seize, and slay, resistance or escape  
 Is none, the fowler's heart leaps with delight ; 355  
 So they, pursuing through the spacious hall  
 The suitors, smote them on all sides, their heads  
 Sounded beneath the sword, with hideous groans  
 The palace rang, and the floor foam'd with blood.  
 Then flew *Leiodes* to Ulysses' knees, 360  
 Which clasping, in wing'd accents thus he cried.  
 I clasp thy knees, Ulysses ! oh respect

4 In this simile we seem to have a curious account of the ancient manner of fowling. The nets (for *νέφεια* is used in that sense by Aristophanes) were spread on a plain ; on an adjoining rising ground were stationed they who had charge of the vultures, (such Homer calls them) which were trained to the sport. The alarm being given to the birds below, the vultures were loosed, when if any of them escaped their talons, the nets were ready to enclose them. See Eustathius. Dacier. Clarke.

My suit, and spare me ! Never have I word  
 Injurious spoken, or injurious deed  
 Attempted 'gainst the women of thy house, 365  
 But others, so transgressing, oft forbad.  
 Yet they abstain'd not, and a dreadful fate  
 Due to their wickedness have therefore found.  
 But I, their soothsayer alone, must fall,  
 Though unoffending ; such is the return 370  
 By mortals made for benefits received !

To whom Ulysses, louting-dark, replied.  
 Is that thy boast ? Hast thou indeed for these  
 The seer's high office fill'd ? Then doubtless oft  
 Thy prayer hath been that distant far might prove 375  
 The day delectable of my return,  
 And that my consort might thy own become  
 To bear thee children ; wherefore thee I doom  
 To a dire death which thou shalt not avoid.

So saying, he caught the faulchion from the floor  
 Which Agelaius had let fall, and smote 381  
 Leiodes, while he kneel'd, athwart his neck  
 So suddenly, that ere his tongue had ceased  
 To plead for life, his head was in the dust.  
 But Phœmius, son of Terpius, bard divine, 385  
 Who, through compulsion, with his song regaled  
 The suitors, a like dreadful death escaped.  
 Fast by the postern, harp in hand, he stood,  
 Doubtful if, issuing, he should take his seat  
 Beside the altar of Hercæan<sup>3</sup> Jove, 390

<sup>3</sup> So called because he was worshipped within the 'Ερκος or wall that surrounded the court.

Where oft Ulysses offer'd, and his sire,  
Fat thighs of beeves, or whether he should haste,  
An earnest suppliant, to embrace his knees.  
That course, at length, most pleased him ; then between  
The beaker and an argent studded throne 395  
He grounded his sweet lyre, and seizing fast  
The Hero's knees, him suppliant thus address'd.

I clasp thy knees, Ulysses ! oh respect  
My suit, and spare me. Thou shalt not escape  
Regret thyself hereafter, if thou slay 400  
Me, charmer of the woes of Gods and men.  
Self-taught am I, and treasure in my mind  
Themes of all argument from heaven inspired,  
And I can sing to thee as to a God.

Ah then behead me not ! Put even the wish 405  
Far from thee ! for thy own beloved son  
Can witness, that not drawn by choice, or driven  
By stress of want, resorting to thine house  
I have regaled these revellers so oft,  
But under force of mightier far than I. 410

So he ; whose words soon as the sacred might  
Heard of Telemachus, approaching quick  
His father, thus humane he interposed.

Hold—Harm not with the vengeful faulchion's edge  
This blameless man ; and we will also spare 415  
Medon the herald, who hath ever been  
A watchful guardian of my boyish years,  
Unless Philœtius have already slain him,  
Or else Eumæus, or thyself, perchance,  
Unconscious, in the tumult of our foes. 420

He spake, whom Medon hearing (for he lay  
Beneath a throne, and in a new-stript hide  
Enfolded, trembling with the dread of death,)  
Sprang from his hiding-place, and casting off  
The skin, flew to Telemachus, embraced 425  
His knees, and in wing'd accents thus exclaim'd.

Prince ! I am here—oh, pity me ! repress  
Thine own, and pacify thy father's wrath,  
That he destroy not me, through fierce revenge  
Of their iniquities who have consumed 430  
His wealth, and in their folly scorn'd his son.

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied,  
Smiling complacent. Fear not; my own son  
Hath pleaded for thee. Therefore (taught thyself  
That truth) teach others the superior worth 435  
Of benefits with injuries compared.

But go ye forth, thou and the sacred bard,  
That ye may sit distant in yonder court  
From all this carnage, while I give command  
Myself concerning it, to those within. 440

He ceased ; they going forth, took each his seat  
Beside Jove's altar, but with careful looks  
Suspicious, dreading without cease the sword.  
Meantime Ulysses search'd his hall in quest  
Of living foes, if any still survived 445  
Unpunish'd ; but he found them all alike  
Weltering in dust and blood ; numerous they lay  
Like fishes when they strew the sinuous shore  
Of Ocean, from the grey gulf drawn aground  
In nets of many a mesh ; they on the sands 450

Lie spread, athirst for the salt wave, till hot  
The gazing sun dries all their life away ;  
So lay the suitors heap'd, and thus at length  
The prudent Chief gave order to his son.

Telemachus ; bid Euryclea come 455  
Quickly, the nurse, to whom I would impart  
The purpose which now occupies me most.

He said ; obedient to his sire, the Prince  
Smote on the door, and summon'd loud the nurse.

Arise, thou ancient governess of all 460  
Our female menials, and come forth ; attend  
My father ; he hath somewhat for thine ear.

So he ; nor flew his words useless away,  
For throwing wide the portal, forth she came,  
And by Telemachus conducted, found 465  
Ere long Ulysses amid all the slain,  
With blood defiled and dust ; dread he appear'd  
As from the pastured ox newly-devour'd  
The lion stalking back ; his ample chest  
With gory drops and his broad cheeks are hung, 470  
Tremendous spectacle ! such seem'd the Chief,  
Blood-stain'd all over. She the carnage spread  
On all sides seeing, and the pools of blood,  
Felt impulse forcible to publish loud  
That wond'rous triumph ; but her lord repress'd 475  
The shout of rapture ere it burst abroad,  
And in wing'd accents thus his will enforced.

Silent exult, O ancient matron dear !  
Shout not, be still. Unholy is the voice  
Of loud thanksgiving over slaughter'd men. 480



Their own atrocious deeds and the Gods' will  
 Have slain all these ; for whether noble guest  
 Arrived or base, they scoff'd at all alike,  
 And for their wickedness have therefore died.  
 But say ; of my domestic women, who 485  
 Have scorn'd me, and whom find'st thou innocent ?

To whom good Euryclea thus replied.  
 My son ! I will declare the truth ; thou keep'st  
 Female domestics fifty in thy house,  
 Whom we have made intelligent to comb 490  
 The fleece, and to perform whatever task.  
 Of these, twice six have overpass'd the bounds  
 Of modesty, respecting neither me,  
 Nor yet the Queen ; and thy own son, adult  
 So lately, no permission had from her 495  
 To regulate the women of her train.  
 But I am gone, I fly with what hath pass'd  
 To the Queen's ear, who nought suspects, so sound  
 She sleeps, by some divinity composed.

Then answer thus Ulysses wise return'd. 500  
 Hush, and disturb her not. Go. Summon first  
 Those wantons, who have long deserved to die.

He ceased ; then issued forth the ancient dame  
 To summon those bad women, and, meantime,  
 Calling his son, Philœtius, and Eumæus, 505  
 Ulysses in wing'd accents thus began.

Bestir ye, and remove the dead ; command  
 Those women also to your help ; then cleanse  
 With bibulous sponges and with water all  
 The seats and tables ; when ye shall have thus 510

Set all in order, lead those women forth,  
And in the centre of the spacious court,  
Between the scullery and the outer-wall  
Smite them with your broad faulchions till they lose  
In death the memory of their secret loves 515  
Indulged with wretches lawless as themselves.

He ended, and the damsels came at once  
All forth, lamenting, and with tepid tears  
Showering the ground ; with mutual labour, first,  
Bearing the bodies forth into the court, 520  
They lodged them in the portico ; meantime  
Ulysses stern enjoin'd them haste, and urged  
By sad necessity, they bore all out.  
With sponges and with water next they cleansed  
The thrones and tables, while Telemachus 525  
Besom'd the floor, Eumæus in that work  
Aiding him and the keeper of the beeves,  
And those twelve damsels bearing forth the soil.  
Thus order given to all within, they next  
Led forth the women, whom they shut between 530  
The scullery and the outer-wall in close  
Durance, from which no prisoner could escape,  
And thus Telemachus discrete began.

An honourable death is not for these  
By my advice, who have so often heap'd 535  
Reproach on mine and on my mother's head,  
And held lewd commerce with the suitor-train.

He said, and noosing a strong galley-rope  
To an huge column, led the cord around  
The spacious dome, suspended so aloft 540

That none with quivering feet might reach the floor.  
As when a flight of doves entering the copse,  
Or broad-wing'd thrushes, strike against the net  
Within, ill rest entangled there they find,  
So they, suspended by the neck, expired 545  
All in one line together. Death abhorr'd!  
With restless feet awhile they beat the air,  
Then ceased. And now through vestibule and hall  
They led Melanthius forth. With ruthless steel  
They pared away his ears and nose, pluck'd forth 550  
His parts of shame, destined to feed the dogs,  
And still indignant, lopp'd his hands and feet.  
Then, laving each his feet and hands, they sought  
Again Ulysses; all their work was done,  
And thus the Chief to Euryclea spake. 555

Bright blast-averting sulphur, nurse, bring fire!  
That I may fumigate my walls; then bid  
Penelope with her attendants down,  
And summon all the women of her train.

But Euryclea thus his nurse replied. 560  
My son! thou hast well said; yet will I first  
Serve thee with vest and mantle. Stand not here  
In thy own palace cloathed with tatters foul  
And beggarly,—she will abhor the sight.

Then answer thus Ulysses wise return'd. 565  
Not so. Bring fire for fumigation first.

He said; nor Euryclea his loved nurse  
Longer delay'd, but sulphur brought and fire,  
When he with purifying steams himself  
Visited every part, the banquet-room, 570

The vestibule, the court. Ranging meantime  
His house magnificent, the matron call'd  
The women to attend their Lord in haste,  
And they attended, bearing each a torch.  
Then gather'd they around him all, sincere 575  
Welcoming his return ; with close embrace  
Enfolding him, each kiss'd his brows, and each  
His shoulders, and his hands lock'd fast in hers.  
He, irresistible the impulse felt  
To sigh and weep, well recognizing all. 580



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THE ODYSSEY.



BOOK XXIII.

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#### ARGUMENT OF THE TWENTY-THIRD BOOK.

Ulysses, with some difficulty, convinces Penelope of his identity, who, at length, overcome by force of evidence, receives him to her arms with transport. He entertains her with a recital of his adventures, and in his narration the principal events of the poem are recapitulated. In the morning, Ulysses, Telemachus, the herdsman and the swine-herd, depart into the country.

# THE ODYSSEY.

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## BOOK XXIII.

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AND now, with exultation loud the nurse  
Again ascended, eager to apprise  
The Queen of her Ulysses' safe return ;  
Joy braced her knees, with nimbleness of youth  
She stepp'd, and at her ear, her thus bespake. 5

Arise, Penelope ! dear daughter, see  
With thy own eyes thy daily wish fulfill'd.  
Ulysses is arriv'd ; hath reach'd at last  
His native home, and all those suitors proud  
Hath slaughter'd, who his family distress'd, 10  
His substance wasted, and controul'd his son.

To whom Penelope discrete replied.  
Dear nurse ! the Gods have surely taken away  
Thy judgement ; they transform the wise to fools,  
And fools conduct to wisdom, and have marr'd 15  
Thy intellect, who wast discrete before.  
Why wilt thou mock me, wretched as I am,  
With tales extravagant ? and why disturb  
Those slumbers sweet that seal'd so fast mine eyes ?  
For such sweet slumbers have I never known 20



Since my Ulysses on his voyage sail'd  
To that bad city never to be named.  
Down instant to thy place again—begone—  
For had another of my maidens dared  
Disturb my sleep with tidings wild as these, 25  
I had dismiss'd her down into the house  
More roughly ; but thine age excuses *thee*.

To whom the venerable matron thus.  
I mock thee not, my child ; no—he is come—  
Himself, Ulysses, even as I say, 30  
That stranger, object of the scorn of all.  
Telemachus well knew his sire arrived,  
But prudently conceal'd the tidings, so  
To ensure the more the suitors' punishment.

So Euryclea ; she transported heard, 35  
And springing from the bed, wrapp'd in her arms  
The ancient woman, shedding tears of joy,  
And in wing'd accents ardent thus replied.

Ah then, dear nurse, inform me ! tell me true !  
Hath he indeed arrived as thou declarest ? 40  
How dared he to assail alone that band  
Of shameless ones, for ever swarming here ?

Then Euryclea thus matron beloved.  
I nothing saw or knew ; but only heard  
Groans of the wounded ; in the interior house 45  
We trembling sat, and every door was fast.  
Thus all remain'd, till by his father sent,  
Thy own son call'd me forth. Going I found  
Ulysses compass'd by the slaughter'd dead.  
They cover'd wide the pavement, heaps on heaps. 50

It would have cheer'd thy heart to have beheld  
Thy husband lion-like with crimson stains  
Of slaughter and of dust all dappled o'er.  
Heap'd in the portal, at this moment, lie  
Their bodies, and he fumigates, meantime, 55  
The house with sulphur and with flames of fire,  
And hath himself sent me to bid thee down.  
Follow me then that ye may give your hearts  
To gladness both, for ye have much endured ;  
But the event, so long your soul's desire, 60  
Is come ; himself hath to his household Gods  
Alive return'd, thee and his son he finds  
Unharm'd and at your home, nor hath he left  
Unpunish'd one of all his enemies.

Her answer'd then Penelope discrete. 65  
Ah dearest nurse ! indulge not to excess  
This dangerous triumph. Thou art well apprized  
How welcome his appearance here would prove  
To all, but chief to me and to his son,  
Fruit of our love. But these things are not so ; 70  
Some God, resentful of their evil deeds,  
And of their biting contumely severe,  
Hath slain those proud ; for whether noble guest  
Arrived or base, alike they scoff'd at all,  
And for their wickedness have therefore died. 75  
But my Ulysses distant far, I know,  
From Greece hath perish'd, and returns no more.

To whom thus Euryclea, nurse beloved.  
What word, my daughter, hath escaped thy lips,  
Who thus affirm'st thy husband, now within 80

And at his own hearth-side, for ever lost ?  
Canst thou be thus incredulous ? Hear again—  
I give thee yet proof past dispute, his scar  
Imprinted by a wild-boar's ivory tusk.  
Laving him I remark'd it, and desired, 85  
Myself, to tell thee, but he, ever wise,  
Compressing with both hands my lips, forbad.  
Come, follow me. My life shall be the pledge.  
If I deceive thee, kill me as thou wilt.

To whom Penelope discrete replied. 90  
Ah, dearest nurse, sagacious as thou art,  
Thou little know'st to scan the counsels wise  
Of the eternal Gods. But let us seek  
My son, however, that I may behold  
The suitors dead, and him by whom they died. 95

So saying, she left her chamber, musing much  
In her descent, whether to interrogate  
Her lord apart, or whether to imprint,  
At once, his hands with kisses and his brows.  
O'erpassing light the portal-step of stone 100  
She enter'd. He sat opposite, illumed  
By the hearth's sprightly blaze, and close before  
A pillar of the dome, waiting with eyes  
Downcast, till viewing him, his noble spouse  
Should speak to him ; but she sat silent long, 105  
Her faculties in mute amazement held.  
By turns she rivetted her eyes on his,  
And, seeing him so foul attired, by turns  
She recognized him not ; then spake her son  
Telemachus, and her silence thus reproved. 110

My mother ! ah my hapless and my most  
Obdurate mother ! wherefore thus aloof  
Shunn'st thou my father, neither at his side  
Sitting affectionate, nor uttering word ?  
Another wife lives not who could endure 115  
Such distance from her husband new-return'd  
To his own country in the twentieth year,  
After much hardship ; but thy heart is still  
As ever, less impressible than stone.

To whom Penelope discrete replied. 120  
I am all wonder, O my son ! my soul  
Is stunn'd within me ; power to speak to him  
Or to interrogate him have I none,  
Or even to look on him ; but if indeed  
He be Ulysses, and have reach'd his home, 125  
I shall believe it soon, by proof convinced  
Of signs, known only to himself and me.

She said ; then smiled the Hero toil-inured,  
And in wing'd accents thus spake to his son.

Leave thou, Telemachus, thy mother here 130  
To sift and prove me ; she will know me soon  
More certainly ; she sees me ill-attired  
And squalid now ; therefore she shews me scorn,  
And no belief hath yet that I am he.  
But we have need, thou and myself, of deep 135  
Deliberation. If a man have slain  
One only citizen, who leaves behind  
Few interested to avenge his death,  
Yet flying he forsakes both friends and home ;  
But we have slain the noblest Princes far 140

Of Ithaca, on whom our city most  
Depended ; therefore, I advise thee, think !

Him, prudent, then answer'd Telemachus.

Be that thy care, my father ! for report  
Proclaims *thee* shrewdest of mankind, with whom 145  
In ingenuity may none compare.

Lead thou ; to follow thee shall be our part  
With prompt alacrity ; nor shall, I judge,  
Courage be wanting to our utmost force.

Thus then replied Ulysses, ever-wise. 150

To me the safest counsel and the best  
Seems this. First wash yourselves, and put ye on  
Your tunics ; bid ye next the maidens take  
Their best attire, and let the bard divine  
Harping melodious play a sportive dance, 155  
That whether passenger or neighbour hear,  
All may imagine nuptials held within.  
So shall not loud report that we have slain  
All those, alarm the city till we gain  
Our woods and fields, where once arrived, such plans  
We will devise, as Jove shall deign to inspire. 161

He spake, and all obedient in the bath  
First laved themselves, then put their tunics on ;  
The damsels also dress'd, and the sweet bard  
Harping melodious, kindled strong desire 165  
In all of jocund song and graceful dance.  
The palace under all its vaulted roof  
Remurmur'd to the feet of sportive youths  
And cinctured maidens, while no few abroad,  
Hearing such revelry within remark'd ;— 170

The Queen with many wooers, weds at last.  
Ah fickle and unworthy fair ! too frail  
Always to keep inviolate the house  
Of her first Lord, and wait for his return.

So spake the people ; but they little knew 175  
What had befallen. Eurynome, meantime,  
With bath and unction served the illustrious Chief  
Ulysses, and he saw himself attired  
Royally once again in his own house.  
Then Pallas over all his features shed 180  
Superior beauty, dignified his form  
With added amplitude, and pour'd his curls  
Like hyacinthine flowers down from his brows.

~~As~~ when some artist by Minerva made  
And Vulcan, wise to execute all tasks 185  
Ingenious, borders silver with a wreath  
Of gold, accomplishing a graceful work,  
Such grace the Goddess o'er his ample chest  
Copious diffused, and o'er his manly brows.  
He, godlike, stepping from the bath, resumed 190  
His former seat magnificent, and sat  
Opposite to the Queen, to whom he said.

Penelope ! the Gods to thee have given  
Of all thy sex, the most obdurate heart.  
Another wife lives not who could endure 195  
Such distance from her husband new-return'd  
To his own country in the twentieth year,  
After such hardship. But prepare me, nurse,  
A bed, for solitary I must sleep,  
Since she is iron, and feels not for me. 200

Him, answer'd then prudent Penelope.  
 I neither magnify thee, sir ! nor yet  
 Depreciate thee, nor is my wonder such  
 As hurries me at once into thy arms,  
 'Though my remembrance perfectly retains, 205  
 Such as he was, Ulysses, when he sail'd  
 On board his bark from Ithaca—Go, nurse,  
 Prepare his bed, but not within the walls  
 Of his own chamber built with his own hands.  
 Spread it without, and spread it well with warm 210  
 Mantles, with fleeces, and with richest rugs.

So spake she, <sup>1</sup>proving him, and, not untouch'd  
 With anger at that word, thus he replied.

Penelope, that order grates my ear.  
 Who hath displaced my bed ? The task were hard 215  
 Even to an artist ; other than a God  
 None might with ease remove it ; as for man,  
 It might defy the stoutest in his prime  
 Of youth, to heave it to a different spot.  
 For in that bed elaborate, a sign, 220  
 A special sign consists ; I was myself  
 The artificer ; I fashion'd it alone.  
 Within the court a leafy olive grew  
 Lofty, luxuriant, pillar-like in girth.

<sup>1</sup> The proof consisted in this—that the bed being attached to the stump of an olive tree still rooted, was immoveable, and Ulysses having made it himself, no person present, he must needs be apprized of the impossibility of her orders, if he were indeed Ulysses : accordingly, this demonstration of his identity satisfies all her scruples.

Around this tree I built, with massy stones      225  
Cemented close, my chamber, roof'd it o'er,  
And hung the glutinated portals on.  
I lopp'd the ample foliage and the boughs,  
And severing near the root its solid bole,  
Smooth'd all the rugged stump with skilful hand,      230  
And wrought it to a pedestal well squared  
And modell'd by the line. I wimble, next,  
The frame throughout, and from the olive-stump  
Beginning, fashion'd the whole bed above  
Till all was finish'd, plated o'er with gold,      235  
With silver, and with ivory, and beneath  
Close interlaced with purple cordage strong.  
Such sign I give thee. But if still it stand  
Unmoved, or if some other, severing sheer  
The olive from its bottom, have displaced      240  
My bed—that matter is best known to thee.

He ceased ; she, conscious of the sign so plain  
Given by Ulysses, heard with fluttering heart  
And faltering knees that proof. Weeping she ran  
Direct toward him, threw her arms around      245  
The Hero, kiss'd his forehead, and replied.

Ah my Ulysses ! pardon me—frown not—  
Thou who at other times hast ever shown  
Superior wisdom ! all our griefs have flow'd  
From the Gods' will ; they envied us the bliss      250  
Of undivided union sweet enjoy'd  
Through life, from early youth to latest age.  
No. Be not angry now ; pardon the fault  
That I embraced thee not as soon as seen,



For horror hath not ceased to overwhelm 255  
My soul, lest some false alien should, perchance,  
Beguile me, for our house draws numerous such.  
Jove's daughter, Argive Helen, ne'er had given  
Free entertainment to a stranger's love,  
Had she foreknown that the heroic sons 260  
Of Greece would bring her to her home again.  
But heaven incited her to that offence,  
Who never, else, had even in her thought  
Harbour'd the foul enormity, from which  
Originated even our distress. 265  
But now, since evident thou hast described  
Our bed, which never mortal yet beheld,  
Ourselves except and Actoris my own  
Attendant, given me when I left my home  
By good Icarus, and who kept the door, 270  
Though hard to be convinced, at last I yield.

So saying, she awaken'd in his soul  
Pity and grief; and folding in his arms  
His blameless consort beautiful, he wept.  
Welcome as land appears to those who swim, 275  
Whose gallant bark Neptune with rolling waves  
And stormy winds hath sunk in the wide sea,  
A mariner or two, perchance, escape  
The foamy flood, and swimming reach the land,  
Weary indeed, and with incrusted brine 280  
All rough, but oh, how glad to climb the coast!  
So welcome in her eyes Ulysses seem'd,  
Around whose neck winding her snowy arms,  
She clung as she would loose him never more.

Thus had they wept till rosy-finger'd morn      285  
Had found them weeping, but Minerva check'd  
Night's almost finish'd course, and held, meantime,  
The golden dawn close prisoner in the Deep,  
Forbidding her to lead her coursers forth,  
Lampus and Phaëthon that furnish light      290  
To all the earth, and join them to the yoke.  
Then thus, Ulysses to Penelope.

My love! we have not yet attain'd the close  
Of all our sufferings, but unmeasured toil  
Arduous remains, which I must still atchieve.      295  
For so the spirit of the Theban seer  
Inform'd me, on that day, when to enquire  
Of mine and of my people's safe return  
I journey'd down to Pluto's drear abode.  
But let us hence to bed, there to enjoy      300  
Tranquil repose. My love, make no delay.

Him answer'd then prudent Penelope.  
Thou shalt to bed at whatsoever time  
Thy soul desires, since the immortal Gods  
Give thee to me and to thy home again.      305  
But, thou hast spoken from the seer of Thebes  
Of arduous toils yet unperform'd; declare  
What toils? Thou wilt disclose them, as I judge,  
Hereafter, and why not disclose them now?

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied.      310  
Ah conversant with woe! why would'st thou learn  
That tale? but I will tell it thee at large.  
Thou wilt not hear with joy, nor shall myself  
With joy rehearse it; for he bade me seek

City after city, bearing, as I go, 315  
 A shapely oar, till I shall find, at length,  
 A people who the sea know not, nor eat  
 Food salted; they trim galley crimson-prow'd  
 Have ne'er beheld, nor yet smooth shaven oar  
 With which the vessel wing'd scuds o'er the waves. 320  
 He gave me also this authentic sign,  
 Which I will tell thee. In what place soe'er  
 I chance to meet a traveller who shall name  
 The oar on my broad shoulder borne, a van<sup>2</sup>;  
 He bade me, planting it on that same spot, 325  
 Worship the King of Ocean with a bull,  
 A ram, and a lascivious boar, then seek  
 My home again, and sacrifice at home  
 An hecatomb to the immortal Gods  
 Inhabitants of the expanse above. 330  
 So shall I die, at length, the gentlest death  
 Remote from Ocean; it shall find me late,  
 In soft serenity of age, the Chief  
 Of a blest people.—Thus he prophesied.

Him answer'd then Penelope discrete. 335  
 If heaven appoint thee in old age a lot  
 More tranquil, hope thence springs of thy escape  
 Some future day from all thy threaten'd woes.

Such was their mutual conference sweet; meantime  
 Eurynome and Euryclea dress'd 340  
 Their bed by light of the clear torch, and when  
 Dispatchful they had spread it broad and deep,

<sup>2</sup> See the note on the same passage, Book xi.

The ancient nurse to her own bed retired.  
Then came Eurynome, to whom in trust  
The chambers appertain'd, and with a torch 345  
Conducted them to rest; she introduced  
The happy pair, and went; transported they  
To rites connubial intermitted long,  
And now recover'd gave themselves again<sup>3</sup>.  
Meantime, the Prince, the herdsman, and the good 350  
Eumæus giving rest each to his feet,  
Ceased from the dance; they made the women cease  
Also, and to their several chambers all  
Within the twilight edifice repair'd.

At length with conjugal endearment both 355  
Satiated, Ulysses tasted and his spouse  
The sweets of mutual converse. She rehearsed,  
Noblest of women, all her numerous woes  
Beneath that roof sustain'd, while she beheld  
The profligacy of the suitor-throng, 360  
Who in their wooing had consumed his herds  
And fatted flocks, and drawn his vessels dry;  
While brave Ulysses, in his turn, to her  
Related his successes and escapes,  
And his afflictions also; he told her all; 365  
She listen'd charm'd, nor slumber on his eyes  
Fell once, or ere he had rehearsed the whole.

<sup>3</sup> Aristophanes the grammarian and Aristarchus chose that the *Odyssey* should end here; but the story is not properly concluded till the tumult occasioned by the slaughter of so many Princes being composed, Ulysses finds himself once more in peaceable possession of his country.

Beginning, he discoursed, how at the first  
He conquer'd in Ciconia, and thence reach'd  
The fruitful shores of the Lotophagi ; 370  
The Cyclops' deeds he told her next, and how  
He well avenged on him his slaughter'd friends  
Whom, pitiless, the monster had devour'd.  
How to the isle of Æolus he came,  
Who welcomed him and safe dismiss'd him thence, 375  
Although not destined to regain so soon  
His native land ; for o'er the fishy deep  
Loud tempests snatch'd him sighing back again.  
How, also at Telepylus he arrived,  
Town of the Læstrygonians, who destroy'd 380  
His ships with all their mariners, his own  
Except, who in his sable bark escaped.  
Of guileful Circe too he spake, deep-skill'd  
In various artifice, and how he reach'd  
With sails and oars the squalid realms of death, 385  
Desirous to consult the prophet there  
Theban Tiresias, and how there he view'd  
All his companions, and the mother bland  
Who bare him, nourisher of his infant years.  
How next he heard the Sirens in one strain 390  
All chiming sweet, and how he reach'd the rocks  
Erratic, Scylla and Charybdis dire,  
Which none secure from injury may pass.  
Then how the partners of his voyage slew  
The Sun's own bees, and how the Thunderer Jove  
Hurl'd down his smoky bolts into his bark, 395  
Depriving him at once of all his crew,

Whose dreadful fate, he yet himself escaped.  
How to Ogygia's isle he came, where dwelt  
The nymph Calypso, who enamour'd wish'd 4  
To espouse him, and within her spacious grot  
Detain'd, and fed, and promised him a life  
Exempt for ever from the sap of age,  
But him moved not. How also he arrived  
After much toil, on the Phæacian coast, 46  
Where every heart revered him as a God,  
And whence, enriching him with brass and gold,  
And costly raiment first, they sent him home.  
At this last word, oblivious slumber sweet  
Fell on him, dissipating all his cares. 48  
—Meantime, Minerva, Goddess azure-eyed,  
On other thoughts intent, soon as she deem'd  
Ulysses with connubial joys sufficed,  
And with sweet sleep, at once from Ocean roused  
The golden-axled chariot of the morn 415  
To illumine earth. Then from his fleecy couch  
The Hero sprang, and thus his spouse enjoin'd.  
Oh consort dear! already we have striven  
Against our lot till wearied with the toil,  
My painful absence, thou with ceaseless tears 420  
Deploring, and myself in deep distress  
Withheld reluctant from my native shores  
By Jove and by the other powers of heaven.  
But since we have in this delightful bed  
Met once again, watch thou and keep secure 425  
All my domestic treasures, and ere long  
I will replace my numerous sheep destroy'd

By those imperious suitors, and the Greeks  
Shall add yet others till my folds be fill'd.  
But to the woodlands go I now—to see 430  
My noble father, who for my sake mourns  
Continual; as for thee, my love, although  
I know thee wise, I give thee thus in charge.  
The sun no sooner shall ascend, than fame  
Shall wide divulge the deed that I have done, 435  
Slaying the suitors under my own roof.  
Thou, therefore, with thy maidens sit retired  
In thy own chamber at the palace-top,  
Nor question ask, nor curious look abroad.  
He said, and covering with his radiant arms 440  
His shoulders, call'd Telemachus; he roused  
Eumæus and the herdsman too, and bade  
All take their martial weapons in their hands.  
Not disobedient they, as he enjoin'd,  
Put armour on, and issued from the gates 445  
Ulysses at their head. The earth was now  
Enlighten'd, but Minerva them in haste  
Led forth into the fields, unseen by all.

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THE ODYSSEY.

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BOOK XXIV.

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#### ARGUMENT OF THE TWENTY-FOURTH BOOK.

Mercury conducts the souls of the suitors down to Ades. Ulysses discovers himself to Laertes, and quells, by the aid of Minerva, an insurrection of the people resenting the death of the suitors.

# THE ODYSSEY.

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## BOOK XXIV.

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AND now Cyllenian Hermes summon'd forth  
The spirits of the suitors ; waving wide  
The golden wand of power to seal all eyes  
In slumber, and to ope them wide again,  
He drove them gibbering<sup>1</sup> down into the shades.  
As when the bats within some hallow'd cave  
Flit squeaking all around, for if but one  
Fall from the rock, the rest all follow him,  
In such connexion mutual they adhere ;  
So, after bounteous Mercury, the ghosts  
Troop'd downward gibbering<sup>1</sup> all the dreary way.  
The Ocean's flood and the Leucadian rock,  
The Sun's gate also and the land of Dreams  
They pass'd, whence next into the meads they came  
Of Asphodel, by shadowy forms possess'd,  
Simulars of the dead. They found the souls  
Of brave Pelides there, and of his friend

Τριζῆσαι—τετρυγῆσαι—

the ghosts

Did squeak and gibber in the Roman streets.

SHAKSP.

Patroclus, of Antilochus renown'd,  
 And of the mightier Ajax, for his form  
 And bulk, (Achilles sole except,) of all 20  
 The sons of the Achaians most admired.  
 These waited on Achilles. Then appear'd  
 The mournful ghost of Agamemnon, son  
 Of Atreus, compass'd by the ghosts of all  
 Who shared his fate beneath Ægisthus' roof, 25  
 And him the ghost of Peleus' son bespake.

Atrides! of all Heroes we esteem'd  
 Thee dearest to the Gods, for that thy sway  
 Extended over such a glorious host  
 At Ilium, scene of sorrow to the Greeks. 30  
 But Fate, whose ruthless force none may escape  
 Of all who breathe, pursued thee from the first.  
 Thou shouldst have perish'd full of honour, full  
 Of royalty, at Troy; so all the Greeks  
 Had raised thy tomb, and thou hadst then bequeath'd  
 Great glory to thy son; but Fate ordain'd 36  
 A death, oh how deplorable! for thee.

To whom Atrides' spirit thus replied.  
 Blest son of Peleus, semblance of the Gods,  
 At Ilium, far from Argos, fallen! for whom 40  
 Contending, many a Trojan, many a Chief  
 Of Greece died also, while in eddies whelm'd  
 Of dust thy vastness<sup>2</sup> spread the plain, nor thee  
 The chariot aught or steed could interest more!  
 All day we waged the battle, nor at last 45

<sup>2</sup> ——— Behemoth, biggest born of earth,  
 Upheaved his vastness. MILTON.

Desisted, but for tempests sent from Jove.  
At length, we bore into the Grecian fleet  
Thy body from the field ; there first we cleansed  
With tepid baths, and oil'd thy shapely corse,  
Then placed thee on thy bier, while many a Greek  
Around thee wept, and shore his locks for thee.  
Thy mother also, hearing of thy death,  
With her immortal nymphs from the abyss  
Arose and came ; terrible was the sound  
On the salt flood ; a panic seized the Greeks,  
And every warrior had return'd on board  
That moment, had not Nestor, antient Chief,  
Illumed by long experience, interposed ;  
His counsels, ever wisest, wisest proved  
Then also, and he thus address'd the host.

Sons of Achaia, fly not ; stay, ye Greeks !  
Thetis arrives with her immortal nymphs  
From the abyss, to visit her dead son.

So he ; and, by his admonition stay'd,  
The Greeks fled not. Then all around thee stood  
The daughters of the Antient of the Deep,  
Mourning disconsolate ; with heavenly robes  
They clothed thy corse, and all the Muses nine  
Deplored thee in full choir with sweetest tones  
Responsive, nor one Grecian hadst thou seen  
Dry-eyed, such grief the Muses moved in all.  
Full seventeen days we day and night deplored  
Thy death, both Gods in heaven and men below ;  
But on the eighteenth day, we gave thy corse  
Its burning, and fat sheep around thee slew

Numerous, with many a pastured ox moon-horn'd.  
We burn'd thee clothed in vesture of the Gods,  
With honey and with oil feeding the flames  
Abundant, while Achaia's Heroes arm'd,  
Both horse and foot, encompassing thy pile, 80  
Clash'd on their shields, and deafening was the din.  
But when the fires of Vulcan had at length  
Consumed thee, at the dawn we stored thy bones  
In unguent and in undiluted wine ;  
For Thetis gave to us a golden vase 85  
Twin-car'd, which she profess'd to have received  
From Bacchus, work divine of Vulcan's hand.  
Within that vase, Achilles, treasured lie  
Thine and the bones of thy departed friend  
Patroclus, but a separate urn we gave 90  
To those of brave Antilochus, who most  
Of all thy friends at Ilium shared thy love  
And thy respect, thy friend Patroclus slain.  
Around both urns we piled a noble tomb,  
(We warriors of the sacred Argive host) 95  
On a tall promontory shooting far  
Into the spacious Hellespont, that all  
Who live, and who shall yet be born, may view  
Thy record, even from the distant waves.  
Then, by permission from the Gods obtain'd, 100  
To the Achaian Chiefs in circus met  
Thetis appointed games. I have beheld  
The burial rites of many a Hero bold,  
When on the death of some great Chief, the youths  
Girding their loins anticipate the prize, 105

But sight of those with wonder fill'd me most,  
So glorious past all others were the games  
By silver-footed 'Thetis given for thee,  
For thou wast ever favour'd of the Gods.  
Thus hast thou not, Achilles ! although dead, 11  
Forgone thy glory, but thy fair report  
Is universal among all mankind ;  
But as for me, what recompense had I,  
My warfare closed ? for whom, at my return,  
Jove framed such dire destruction by the hands 11  
Of fell Ægisthus and my murtheress wife.

Thus mutual they conferr'd ; meantime approach'd.  
Swift messenger of heaven, the Argicide,  
Conducting thither all the shades of those  
Slain by Ulysses. At that sight amazed 120  
Both moved toward them. Agamemnon's shade  
Knew well Amphimedon, for he had been  
Erewhile his father's guest in Ithaca,  
And thus the spirit of Atreus' son began.

Amphimedon ! by what disastrous chance, 125  
Coævals as ye seem, and of an air  
Distinguish'd all, descend ye to the Deeps ?  
For not the chosen youths of a whole town  
Should form a nobler band. Perish'd ye sunk  
Amid vast billows and rude tempests raised 130  
By Neptune's power ? or on dry land through force  
Of hostile multitudes, while cutting off  
Beevcs from the herd, or driving flocks away ?  
Or fighting for your city and your wives ?  
Resolve me ; I was once a guest of yours. 135

Remember'st not what time at your abode  
 With godlike Menelaus I arrived,  
 That we might win Ulysses with his fleet  
 To follow us to Troy? scarce we prevail'd  
 At last to gain the city-waster Chief, 140  
 And after all, consumed a whole month more  
 The wide sea traversing from side to side.

To whom the spirit of Amphimedon.  
 Illustrious Agamemnon, King of men !  
 All this I bear in mind, and will rehearse 145  
 The manner of our most disastrous end.  
 Believing brave Ulysses lost, we woo'd  
 Meantime his wife ; she our detested suit  
 Would neither ratify nor yet refuse,  
 But, planning for us a tremendous death, 150  
 This novel stratagem, at last, devised.  
 Beginning in her own recess, a web  
 Of slenderest thread, and of a length and breadth  
 Unusual, thus the suitors she address'd.

Princes, my suitors ! since the noble Chief 155  
 Ulysses is no more, enforce not yet  
 My nuptials ; wait till I shall finish first  
 A funeral robe (lest all my threads decay)  
 Which for the antient Hero I prepare,  
 Laertes, looking for the mournful hour 160  
 When fate shall snatch him to eternal rest ;  
 Else I the censure dread of all my sex,  
 Should he, so wealthy, want at last a shroud.  
 on † So spake the Queen ; we, unsuspecting all,  
 With her request complied. Thenceforth, all day 165

She wove the ample web, and by the aid  
Of torches ravell'd it again at night.  
Three years she thus by artifice our suit  
Eluded safe, but when the fourth arrived,  
And the same season, after many moons 170  
And fleeting days return'd, a damsel then  
Of her attendants, conscious of the fraud,  
Reveal'd it, and we found her pulling loose  
The splendid web. Thus through constraint, at length  
She finish'd it, and in her own despatch. 175  
But when the Queen produced, at length, her work  
Finish'd, new-blanch'd, bright as the sun or moon,  
Then came Ulysses, by some adverse God  
Conducted to the cottage on the verge  
Of his own fields, in which his swine-herd dwells; 180  
There also the illustrious Hero's son  
Arrived soon after, in his sable bark  
From sandy Pylus borne; they plotting both  
A dreadful death for all the suitors, sought  
Our glorious city, but Ulysses last, 185  
And first Telemachus. The father came  
Conducted by his swine-herd, and attired  
In tatters foul; a mendicant he seem'd,  
Time-worn, and halted on a staff. So clad,  
And entering on the sudden, he escaped 190  
All knowledge even of our eldest there,  
And we reviled and smote him; he, although  
Beneath his own roof smitten and reproach'd,  
With patience suffer'd it awhile, but roused  
By inspiration of Jove ægis-arm'd 195



At length, in concert with his son convey'd  
 To his own chamber his resplendent arms,  
 There lodged them safe, and barr'd the massy doors.  
 Then, in his subtlety he bade the Queen  
 A contest institute with bow and rings 200  
 Between the hapless suitors, whence ensued  
 Slaughter to all. No suitor there had power  
 To overcome the stubborn bow that mock'd  
 All our attempts; and when the weapon huge  
 At length was offer'd to Ulysses' hands, 205  
 With clamour'd menaces we bade the swain  
 Withhold it from him, plead he as he might;  
 Telemachus alone, with loud command,  
 Bade give it him, and the illustrious Chief  
 Receiving in his hand the bow, with ease 210  
 Bent it, and sped a shaft through all the rings.  
 Then springing to the portal steps, he pour'd  
 The arrows forth, peer'd terrible around,  
 Pierced King Antinoüs, and aiming sure  
 His deadly darts, pierced others after him, 215  
 Till in one common carnage heap'd we lay.  
 Some God, as plain appear'd, vouchsafed them aid,  
 Such ardour urg'd them, and with such dispatch  
 They slew us on all sides; hideous were heard  
 The groans of dying men fell'd to the earth 220  
 With head-strokes rude, and the floor swam with blood.  
 Such, royal Agamemnon! was the fate  
 By which we perish'd, all whose bodies lie  
 Buried still, and in Ulysses' house,  
 For tidings none hath yet our friends alarm'd 225

And kindred, who might cleanse from sable gore  
Our clotted wounds, and mourn us on the bier,  
Which are the rightful privilege of the dead.

Him answer'd, then, the shade of Atreus' son.

Oh happy offspring of Laertes ! shrewd 236

Ulysses ! matchless valour thou hast shewn

Recovering thus thy wife ; nor less appears

The virtue of Icarius' daughter wise,

The chaste Penelope, so faithful found

To her Ulysses, husband of her youth. 235

His glory, by superior merit earn'd,

Shall never die, and the immortal Gods

Shall make Penelope a theme of song

Delightful in the ears of all mankind.

Not such was Clytemnestra, daughter vile 240

Of Tyndarus ; she shed her husband's blood,

And shall be chronicled in song a wife

Of hateful memory, by whose offence

Even the virtuous of her sex are shamed.

Thus they, beneath the vaulted roof obscure 245

Of Pluto's house, conferring mutual stood.

Meantime, descending from the city-gates,

Ulysses, by his son and by his swains

Follow'd, arrived at the delightful farm

Which old Laertes had with strenuous toil 250

Himself long since acquired. There stood his house

Encompass'd by a bower in which the hinds

Who served and pleased him, ate, and sat, and slept.

An ancient woman, a Sicilian, dwelt

There also, who in that sequester'd spot 255

Attended diligent her aged Lord.

Then thus Ulysses to his followers spake.

Haste now, and entering, slay ye of the swine  
The best for our regale ; myself the while,  
Will prove my father, if his eye hath still 260  
Discernment of me, or if absence long  
Have worn the knowledge of me from his mind.

He said, and gave into his servants' care  
His arms ; they swift proceeded to the house,  
And to the fruitful grove himself as swift 265  
To prove his father. Down he went at once  
Into the spacious garden-plot, but found  
Nor Dolius there, nor any of his sons  
Or servants ; they were occupied elsewhere,  
And with the ancient hind himself, employ'd 270  
Collecting thorns with which to fence the grove.

In that umbrageous spot he found alone  
Laertes, with his hoe clearing a plant ;  
Sordid his tunic was, with many a patch  
Mended unseemly ; leathern were his greaves, 275  
Thong-tied and also patch'd, a frail defence  
Against sharp thorns, while gloves secured his hands  
From briar-points, and on his head he bore  
A goat-skin casque, nourishing hopeless woe.

No sooner then the Hero toil-inured 280  
Saw him age-worn and wretched, than he paused  
Beneath a lofty pear-tree's shade to weep.

While There standing much he mused, whether, at once,  
- Missing and clasping in his arms his sire,  
To tell him all, by what means he had reach'd 285

His native country, or to prove him first.  
At length he chose as his best course, with words  
Of seeming strangeness to accost his ear,  
And with that purpose, moved direct toward him.  
He stooping low, loosen'd the earth around  
A garden-plant, when his illustrious son  
Now standing close beside him, thus began.

Old sir ! thou art no novice in these toils  
Of culture, but thy garden thrives ; I mark  
In all thy ground no plant, fig, olive, vine,  
Pear-tree or flower-bed suffering through neglect.  
But let it not offend thee if I say  
That thou neglect'st thyself, at the same time  
Oppress'd with age, sun-parch'd, and ill-attired.  
Not for thy inactivity, methinks,  
Thy master slights thee thus, nor speaks thy form  
Or thy surpassing stature servile aught  
In thee, but thou resemblest more a King.  
Yes—thou resemblest one who, bathed and fed,  
Should softly sleep ; such is the claim of age.  
But tell me true—for whom labourest thou,  
And whose this garden ? answer me beside,  
For I would learn ; have I indeed arrived—  
In Ithaca, as one whom here I met  
Even now assured me, but who seem'd a man  
Not overwise, refusing both to hear  
My questions, and to answer when I ask'd  
Concerning one in other days my guest  
And friend, if he have still his being here,  
Or have deceased and journey'd to the shades ?

For I will tell thee ; therefore mark. Long since  
A stranger reach'd my house in my own land,  
Whom I with hospitality received,  
Nor ever sojourn'd foreigner with me  
Whom I loved more. He was by birth, he said, 320  
Ithacan, and Laertes claim'd his sire,  
Son of Arcesias. Introducing him  
Beneath my roof, I entertain'd him well,  
And proved by gifts his welcome at my board.  
I gave him seven talents of wrought gold, 325  
A goblet, argent all, with flowers emboss'd,  
Twelve single cloaks, twelve carpets, mantles twelve  
Of brightest lustre, with as many vests,  
And added four fair damsels, whom he chose  
Himself, well born and well accomplish'd all. 330

Then thus his ancient sire weeping replied.  
Stranger ! thou hast in truth attain'd the isle  
Of thy enquiry, but it is possess'd  
By a rude race, and lawless. Vain, alas !  
Were all thy numerous gifts ; yet hadst thou found 335  
Him living here in Ithaca, with gifts  
Reciprocated he had sent thee hence,  
Requiting honourably in his turn  
Thy hospitality. But give me quick  
Answer, and true. How many have been the years 340  
Since thy reception of that hapless guest  
My son ? for mine, my own dear son was he.  
But him, far distant both from friends and home,  
Thy  
Either the fishes of the unknown Deep  
Have eaten, or wild beasts and fowls of prey, 345  
Nor I, or she who bare him, was ordain'd

To bathe his shrouded body with our tears,  
Nor his chaste wife, well-dower'd Penelope  
To close her husband's eyes, and to deplore  
His doom, which is the privilege of the dead. 35  
But tell me also thou, for I would learn,  
Who art thou? whence? where born? and sprung  
from whom?

The bark in which thou and thy godlike friends  
Arrived, where is she anchor'd on our coast?  
Or camest thou only passenger on board 35  
Another's bark, who landed thee and went?

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied.

I will with all simplicity relate  
What thou hast ask'd. Of Alybas am I,  
Where in much state I dwell, son of the rich 36  
Aphedidas, royal Polypemon's son,  
And I am named Eperitus; by storms  
Driven from Sicily I have arrived,  
And yonder, on the margin of the field  
That skirts your city, I have moor'd my bark. 36  
Five years have pass'd since thy Ulysses left,  
Unhappy Chief! my country; yet the birds  
At his departure hover'd on the right,

And in that sign rejoicing, I dismiss'd  
Him thence rejoicing also, for we hoped 37  
To mix in social intercourse again,  
And to exchange once more pledges of love.

He spake; then sorrow as a sable cloud  
Involved Laertes; gathering with both hands  
The dust, he pour'd it on his reverend head 37  
With many a piteous groan. Ulysses' heart

Commotion felt, and his stretch'd nostrils throbb'd  
 With agony close-pent, while fix'd he eyed  
 His father ; with a sudden force he sprang  
 Toward him, clasp'd, and kiss'd him, and exclaim'd. 380

My father ! I am he. 'Thou seest thy son  
 Absent these twenty years at last return'd.  
 But bid thy sorrows cease ; suspend henceforth  
 All lamentation ; for I tell thee true,  
 (And the occasion bids me briefly tell thee) 385  
 I have slain all the suitors at my home,  
 And all their taunts and injuries avenged.

Then answer thus Laertes quick return'd.  
 If thou hast come again, and art indeed  
 My son Ulysses, give me then the proof 390  
 Indubitable, that I may believe.

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied.  
 View, first, the scar which with his ivory tusk  
 A wild boar gave me, when at thy command  
 And at my mother's, to Autolycus 395  
 Her father, on Parnassus, I repair'd  
 Seeking the gifts which, while a guest of yours,  
 He promised should be mine. Accept beside  
 This proof.<sup>1</sup> I will enumerate all the trees  
 Which, walking with thee in this cultured spot 400  
 (Boy then) I begg'd, and thou confirm'dst my own.  
 We paced between them, and thou madest me learn  
 The name of each. Thou gavest me thirteen pears<sup>3</sup>,  
 him, ten apples<sup>3</sup>, thirty figs<sup>3</sup>, and fifty ranks

<sup>3</sup> The fruit is here used for the tree that bore it, as it is in the Greek ; the Latins used the same mode of expression, neither is it uncommon in our own language.

Did promise me of vines, their alleys all 405  
Corn-cropp'd between. There oft as sent from Jove  
The influences of the year descend,  
Grapes of all hues and flavours clustering hang.

He said ; Laertes conscious of the proofs  
Indubitable by Ulysses given, 41  
With faltering knees and faltering heart both arms  
Around him threw. The Hero toil-inured  
Drew to his bosom close his fainting sire,  
Who, breath recovering, and his scatter'd powers  
Of intellect, at length thus spake aloud. 41

Ye Gods ! oh then your residence is still  
On the Olympian heights, if punishment  
At last hath seized on those flagitious men.  
But terror shakes me, lest, incensed, ere long  
All Ithaca flock hither, and dispatch 42  
Swift messengers with these dread tidings charged  
To every Cephallenian state around.

Him answer'd then Ulysses ever wise.  
Courage ! fear nought, but let us to the house  
Beside the garden, whither I have sent 4  
Telemachus, the herdsman, and the good  
Eumæus to prepare us quick repast.

So they conferr'd, and to Laertes' house  
Pass'd on together ; there arrived, they found  
Those three preparing now their plenteous feast, 4  
And mingling sable wine ; then, by the hands  
Of his Sicilian matron, the old King  
Was bathed, anointed, and attired afresh, 5  
And Pallas, drawing nigh, dilated more  
His limbs, and gave his whole majestic form 4



Increase of amplitude. He left the bath.

His son, amazed as he had seen a God

Alighted newly from the skies, exclaim'd.

My father ! doubtless some immortal Power

Hath clothed thy form with dignity divine. 440

Then thus replied his venerable sire.

Jove ! Pallas ! Phœbus ! oh that I possess'd

Such vigour now, as when in arms I took

Nericus, continental city fair,

With my brave Cephallenians ! oh that such 445

And arm'd as then, I yesterday had stood

Beside thee in thy palace, combating

Those suitors proud, then had I strew'd the floor

With numerous slain, to thy exceeding joy.

Such was their conference ; and now, the task 450

Of preparation ended, and the feast

Set forth, on couches and on thrones they sat,

And ranged in order due, took each his share.

Then ancient Dolius, and with him, his sons

Arrived toil-worn, by the Sicilian dame 455

Summon'd, their cateress, and their father's kind

Attendant ever in his eve of life.

They, seeing and recalling soon to mind

Ulysses, in the middle mansion stood

Wondering, when thus Ulysses with a voice 460

Of some reproof, but gentle, them bespake.

Old servant, sit and eat, banishing fear

And mute amazement ; for, although provoked  
No pace-appetite, we have long time abstain'd,

Expecting every moment thy return. 465

He said ; then Dolius with expanded arms

Sprang right toward Ulysses, seized his hand,  
Kiss'd it, and in wing'd accents thus replied.

Oh master ever dear ! since thee the Gods  
Themselves, in answer to our warm desires, 470  
Have, unexpectedly, at length restored,  
Hail, and be happy, and heaven make thee such !  
But say, and truly ; knows the prudent Queen  
Already thy return, or shall we send  
Ourselves an herald with the joyful news ? 475

To whom Ulysses, ever wise, replied.  
My ancient friend, thou may'st release thy mind  
From that solicitude ; she knows it well.

So he ; then Dolius to his glossy seat  
Return'd, and all his sons gathering around 480  
Ulysses, welcomed him and grasp'd his hand,  
Then sat beside their father ; thus beneath  
Laertes' roof they, joyful, took repast.

But Fame with rapid haste the city roam'd  
In every part, promulging in all ears 485  
The suitors' horrid fate. No sooner heard  
The multitude that tale, than one and all  
Groaning they met and murmuring before  
Ulysses' gates. Bringing the bodies forth,  
They buried each his friend, but gave the dead 490  
Of other cities to be ferried home  
By fishermen on board their rapid barks.  
All hasted then to council ; sorrow wrung  
Their hearts, and, the assembly now convened,  
Arising first Eupithes spake, for grief  
Sat heavy on his soul, grief for the loss

Of his Antinoüs by Ulysses slain  
Foremost of all, whom mourning, thus he said.

My friends ! no trivial fruits the Greecians reap  
Of this man's doings. *Those* he took with him 500  
On board his barks, a numerous train and bold,  
Then lost his barks, lost all his numerous train,  
And *these*, our noblest, slew at his return.  
Come therefore—ere he yet escape by flight  
To Pylus or to noble Elis, realm 505  
Of the Epeans, follow him ; else shame  
Attends us and indelible reproach.

If we avenge not on these men the blood  
Of our own sons and brothers, farewell then  
All that makes life desirable ; my wish 510  
Henceforth shall be to mingle with the shades.  
Oh then pursue and seize them ere they fly.

Thus he with tears, and pity moved in all.  
Then, Medon and the sacred bard whom sleep  
Had lately left, arriving from the house 515  
Of Laertiades, approach'd ; amid  
The throng they stood ; all wonder'd seeing them,  
And Medon, prudent senior, thus began.

Hear me, my countrymen ! Ulysses plann'd  
With no disapprobation of the Gods 520  
The deed that ye deplore. I saw, myself,  
A Power immortal at the Hero's side,  
In semblance just of Mentor ; now the God,  
In front apparent, led him on, and now,  
On his side to side of all the palace, urged 525  
To flight the suitors ; heaps on heaps they fell.

He said; then terroure wan seized every cheek  
And Halitherses, Hero old, the son  
Of Mastor, who alone among them all  
Knew past and future, prudent, thus began. 530

Now, O ye men of Ithaca! my words  
Attentive hear! by your own fault, my friends,  
This deed hath been perform'd; for when myself  
And noble Mentor counsell'd you to check  
The sin and folly of your sons, ye would not. 535  
Great was their wickedness, and flagrant wrong  
They wrought, the wealth devouring, and the wife  
Dishonouring of an illustrious Chief  
Whom they deem'd destined never to return.  
But hear my counsel. Go not, lest ye draw 540  
Disaster down and woe on your own heads.

He ended; then with boisterous roar (although  
Part kept their seats) upsprang the multitude,  
For Halitherses pleased them not, they chose  
Eupithes' counsel rather; all at once 545  
To arms they flew, and clad in dazzling brass,  
Before the city form'd their dense array.  
Leader infatuate, at their head appear'd  
Eupithes, hoping to avenge his son  
Antinoüs, but was himself ordain'd 550  
To meet his doom, and to return no more.  
Then thus Minerva to Saturnian Jove.

Oh father! son of Saturn! Jove supreme!  
Declare the purpose hidden in thy breast.  
Wilt thou that this hostility proceed,  
Or wilt thou grant them amity again?

To whom the cloud-assembler God replied.  
 Why asks my daughter? didst thou not design  
 Thyself, that brave Ulysses coming home  
 Should slay those profligates? act as thou wilt, 560  
 But thus I counsel. Since the noble Chief  
 Hath slain the suitors, now let peace ensue  
 Oath-bound, and reign Ulysses evermore!  
 The slaughter of their brethren and their sons  
 To strike from their remembrance, shall be ours. 565  
 Let mutual amity, as at the first,  
 Unite them, and let wealth and peace abound.

So saying, he animated to her task  
 Minerva prompt before, and from the heights  
 Olympian down to Ithaca she flew. 570  
 Meantime Ulysses (for their hunger now  
 And thirst were sated) thus address'd his hinds.

Look ye abroad, lest haply they approach.  
 He said, and at his word, forth went a son  
 Of Dolius; at the gate he stood, and thence 575  
 Beholding all that multitude at hand,  
 In accents wing'd thus to Ulysses spake.

They come—they are already arrived—arm all!  
 Then, all arising, put their armour on,  
 Ulysses with his three, and the six sons 580  
 Of Dolius; Dolius also with the rest  
 Arm'd and Laertes, although silver-hair'd,  
 Warriors perforce. When all were clad alike  
 In radiant armour, throwing wide the gates  
 Partly sallied, and Ulysses led the way. 585  
 Then Jove's own daughter Pallas, in the form

And with the voice of Mentor, came in view,  
Whom seeing Laertiades rejoiced,  
And thus Telemachus, his son, bespake.

Now, oh my son ! thou shalt observe, untold 590  
By me, where fight the bravest. Oh shame not  
Thine ancestry, who have in all the earth  
Proof given of valour in all ages past.

To whom Telemachus, discrete, replied.  
My father ! if thou wish that spectacle, 595  
Thou shalt behold thy son as thou hast said,  
In nought dishonouring his noble race.

Then was Laertes joyful, and exclaim'd,  
What sun hath risen to day<sup>4</sup> ? oh blessed Gods !  
My son and grandson emulous dispute 600  
The prize of glory, and my soul exults.

He ended, and Minerva, drawing nigh  
To the old King, thus counsell'd him. Oh friend  
Whom most I love, son of Arcesias ; prayer  
Preferring to the virgin azure-eyed, 605  
And to her father Jove, delay not, shake  
Thy lance in air, and give it instant flight.

So saying, the Goddess nerved his arm anew.  
He sought in prayer the daughter dread of Jove,  
And brandishing it, hurl'd his lance ; it struck 610  
Jupithes, pierced his helmet brazen-check'd  
That stay'd it not, but forth it sprang beyond,  
And with loud clangor of his arms he fell.  
Then flew Ulysses and his noble son

<sup>4</sup> Τις νύ μοι ἡμέρη ἦδε ;—So Cicero, who seems to translate  
- Proh dii immortales ! Quis hic illuxit dies ! See Clarke  
loco.

With faulchion and with spear of double edge 615  
To the assault, and of them all had left  
None living, none had to his home return'd,  
But that Jove's virgin daughter with a voice  
Of loud authority thus quell'd them all.

Peace, O ye men of Ithaca ! while yet 620  
The field remains undeluged with your blood.

So she, and fear at once paled every cheek.  
All trembled at the voice divine ; their arms  
Escaping from the grasp fell to the earth,  
And covetous of longer life, each fled 625  
Back to the city. Then Ulysses sent  
His voice abroad, and with an eagle's force  
Sprang on the people ; but Saturnian Jove  
Cast down, incontinent, his smouldering bolt  
At Pallas feet, and thus the Goddess spake. 630

Laertes' noble son, for wiles renown'd !  
Forbear ; abstain from slaughter ; lest thyself  
Incur the anger of high-thundering Jove.

So Pallas, whom Ulysses glad obey'd.  
Then faithful covenants of peace between 635  
Both sides ensued, ratified in the sight  
Of Pallas, progeny of Jove, who seem'd  
In voice and form, the Mentor known to all.

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THE  
BATTLE OF THE FROGS AND MICE.

TRANSLATED INTO  
ENGLISH BLANK VERSE  
BY THE SAME HAND.

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Beware thou trespass not against the truth  
 Lie not! for should I find thy merit such , 20  
 As claims my love, I will conduct thee hence  
 To my abode, where gifts thou shalt receive  
 Liberal and large, with hospitable fare.  
 I am the King Physignathus<sup>2</sup>, revered  
 By the inhabitants of all this pool, 25  
 Chief of the frogs for ever. Me, long since,  
 Peleus<sup>3</sup> begat, embracing on the banks  
 Of the Eridanus my mother fair,  
 Hydromedusa<sup>4</sup>. Nor thee less than King  
 Or leader bold in fight thy form proclaims, 30  
 Stout as it is, and beautiful.—Dispatch—  
 Speak therefore, and declare thy pedigree.

He ceased, to whom Psycharpax<sup>5</sup> thus replied.  
 Illustrious sir! wherefore hast thou enquired  
 My derivation, known to all, alike 35  
 To Gods and men, and to the fowls of heaven?  
 I am Psycharpax, and the dauntless Chief  
 Troxartes<sup>6</sup> is my sire, whose beauteous spouse  
 Daughter of Pternotroctes<sup>7</sup> brought me forth,  
 Lichomyle<sup>8</sup> by name. A cave of earth 40  
 My cradle was, and, in my youngling state,  
 My mother nourish'd me with almonds, figs,  
 And delicacies of a thousand names.  
 But diverse as our natures are, in nought

<sup>2</sup> The pouter.  
<sup>3</sup> disn, <sup>3</sup> Governess of the waters.

<sup>6</sup> The bread eater.

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<sup>7</sup> The bacon-eater.

Now alas ! can we be friends ? 45  
 While thou art thine abode, while I partake  
 Of his sustenance. The basket stored  
 With beaten loaves thrice kneaded, 'scapes not me.  
 Safer broad, enrich'd with balmy sweets,  
 Than ham in slices spread, nor liver wrapt 50  
 In nic silver-white, nor curds express'd  
 In sweetest milk, nor, sweeter still, the full  
 Honeycomb, coveted by Kings themselves,  
 'Tis sought by skilful cook invented yet  
 In sauce or seasoning for delight of man. 55  
 I am brave also, and shrink not at sound  
 Of glorious war, but rushing to the van,  
 Fight with the foremost combatants. No fear  
 Of man himself shakes me, vast as he is,  
 To his bed I steal, and make me sport 60  
 In plucking his fingers' end, or with sharp tooth  
 Biting his heel so neatly that he sleeps  
 Unfound the while, unconscious of the bite.  
 Of things, of all that are, appal me most,  
 The owl and cat. These cause me many a pang. 65  
 The doe does the hollow gin insidious, fair  
 In promises, but in performance foul,  
 The line of death ! yet most of all I dread  
 The nimble mousers, who can dart a paw  
 To pierce me, enter at what chink I may. 70  
 I beg to return—your diet, parsley, kail,  
 Turnip, radish, gourd, (for, as I understand,  
 I eat no other) are not to my taste.  
 I am then with smiles answer'd Physignathus.

Stranger ! thou vauntest much thy daim, & fay  
 But, both on shore and in the lake we boay,  
 Our dainties also, and such sights as much  
 Would move thy wonder ; for by gift from Je  
 We leap as well as swim, can range the land  
 For food, or diving, seek it in the Deep.  
 Would'st thou the proof ? 'tis easy—mount my ba  
 There cling as for thy life, and thou shalt share  
 With rapture the delights of my abode.

He said, and gave his back. Upsprang the mot  
 Lightly, and with his arms enfolded fast  
 The Frog's soft neck. Pleased was he, at the first  
 With view of many a creek and bay, nor less  
 With his smooth swimming on whose back he rode  
 But when, at length, the clear wave dash'd his side  
 Then, fill'd with penitential sorrows vain  
 He wept, pluck'd off his hair, and gathering close  
 His hinder feet, survey'd with trembling heart  
 The novel sight, and wish'd for land again.  
 Groans follow'd next, extorted groans, through st  
 Of shivering fear, and, with extended tail  
 Drawn like a long oar after him, he pray'd  
 For land again ; but, while he pray'd, again  
 The clear wave dash'd him. Much he shriek'd  
 much

He clamour'd, and, at length thus sorrowing, sa  
 Oh desperate navigation strange ! not thus  
 Europa floated to the shores of Crete  
 A the broad back of her enamour'd bull.  
 And now, dread spectacle to both, behold

n Hydra! on the lake with crest erect  
 e and right toward them. At that sight 105  
 oment Physignathus, heedless alas!  
 n fear, how great a Prince he should destroy.  
 elf, at bottom of the pool escaped  
 dreadful death; but, at his first descent  
 dged, Psycharpax fell into the flood. 110  
 ere, stretch'd supine, he clench'd his hands. he  
 shriek'd,  
 unged oft, and lashing out his heels afar,  
 t rose again, but no deliverance found.  
 length, oppress'd by his drench'd coat, and soon  
 sink for ever, thus he prophecied. 115  
 Thou hast released thy shoulders at my cost,  
 ysignathus! unfeeling as the rock,  
 it not unnoticed by the Gods above.  
 a worst of traitors! on dry land, I ween,  
 ou hadst not foil'd me, whether in the race 120  
 wrestling-match, or at whatever game.  
 ou hast by fraud prevail'd, casting me off  
 o the waters; but an eye divine  
 es all. Nor hope thou to escape the host  
 Mice, who shall, ere long, avenge the deed. 125  
 So saying, he sank and died; whom, while he sat  
 posing on the lake's soft verge, the Mouse  
 chopinax<sup>9</sup> observed; aloud he wail'd,  
 d flew with those sad tidings to his friends.  
 ief, at the sound, immeasurable seized 130

<sup>9</sup> The dish-licker.



On all, and by command, at dawn of day  
 The heralds call'd a council at the house  
 Of brave Troxartes, father of the Prince  
 Now lost, a carcase now, nor nigh to land  
 Weltering, but distant in the middle pool.  
 The multitude in haste convened, uprose  
 Troxartes for his son incensed, and said,

Ah friends! although my damage from the Frog  
 Sustain'd be greatest, yet is yours not small.  
 Three children I have lost, wretch that I am,  
 All sons. A merciless and hungry cat  
 Finding mine eldest son abroad, surprised  
 And slew him. Lured into a wooden snare,  
 (New machination of unfeeling man  
 For slaughter of our race, and named a trap)  
 My second died. And now, as ye have heard,  
 My third, his mother's and my darling, him  
 Physignathus hath drown'd in yon abyss.  
 Haste therefore, and in gallant armour bright  
 Attired, march forth, ye Mice, now seek the foe.

So saying, he roused them to the fight, and Ma  
 Attendant arm'd them. Splitting first the pods  
 Of beans which they had sever'd from the stalk  
 With hasty tooth by night, they made them great  
 Their corslets were of platted straw, well lined  
 With spoils of an excoriated cat.

The lamp contributed its central tin,  
 A shield for each. The glittering needle long  
 In'd every neck with a terrific spear,  
 And auburn shells of nuts their brows enclosed.

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Then, soon as they shall rush to the assault  
 Seizing them by the helmet, as they come,  
 We will precipitate them, arms and all,  
 Into the lake; unskilful as they are  
 To swim, their suffocation there is sure,  
 And we will build a trophy to record  
 The great Mouse-massacre for evermore.

So saying, he gave commandment, and all arm  
 With leaves of mallows each his legs incased,  
 Guarded his bosom with a corslet cut  
 From the green beet, with foliage tough of kail  
 Fashion'd his ample buckler, with a rush  
 Keen-tipt, of length tremendous, fill'd his gripe,  
 And on his brows set fast a cockle-shell.  
 Then on the summit of the loftiest bank  
 Drawn into phalanx firm they stood, all shook  
 Their quivering spears, and wrath swell'd every br

Jove saw them, and assembling all the Gods  
 To council in the skies, Behold, he said,  
 Yon numerous hosts, magnanimous, robust,  
 And rough with spears, how like the giant race  
 They move, or like the Centaurs! smiling, next,  
 He ask'd, of all the Gods, who favour'd most  
 The Mice, and who the Frogs? but at the last,  
 Turning toward Minerva, thus he spake.

The Mice, my daughter, need thee; goest thou  
 To aid thy friends the Mice, inmates of thine,  
 While to thy temple drawn by savoury steams  
 A shoal, and day by day refresh'd  
 With dainties there, dance on thy sacred floor?

The God, and Pallas thus replied  
 'I suffer as they may, the Mice 220  
 Give no aid from me, whom much they wrong,  
 For my wreaths, and plundering of their oil  
 Ramps.—But this, of all their impious deeds,  
 Offends me most, that they have eaten holes  
 In my best mantle, which with curious art 225  
 Divine, I wove, light, easy, delicate ;  
 And now, the artificer whom I employ'd  
 To mend it, clamouring demands a price  
 Exorbitant, which moves me much to wrath,  
 For I obtain'd on trust those costly threads, 230  
 And have not wherewithal to pay the arrear.  
 For love I move the Frogs, or purpose more  
 To succour even them, since they not less,  
 Bolts as they are, and destitute of thought,  
 Have incommoded me. For when, of late, 235  
 Returning from a fight weary and faint  
 Needed rest, and would have slept, no sleep  
 Found I, those ceaseless croakers of the lake  
 Boisy, perverse, forbidding me a wink.  
 Sleepless, and with an aching head I lay 240  
 Herefore until the crowing of the cock,  
 By my advice, then, O ye Gods, move not  
 Or interfere, favouring either side,  
 Best ye be wounded ; for both hosts alike  
 Are valiant, nor would scruple to assail  
 Even ourselves. Suffice it, therefore, hence  
 To view the battle, safe, and at our ease  
 She ceased, and all complied. Meantime, the hosts

Drew nearer, and in front of each was  
 An herald, gonfalon in hand ; huge gnat  
 Through clarions of unwieldy length saw  
 The dreadful note of onset fierce, and J  
 Doubled the signal, thundering from above.

First with his spear Hypsiboas<sup>12</sup> assailed  
 Lichenor<sup>13</sup>. Deep into his body rush'd  
 The point, and pierced his liver. Prone  
 Laid all his glossy down with dust defiled  
 Then, Troglodytes<sup>14</sup> hurl'd his massy spear  
 At Pelion<sup>15</sup>, which he planted in his chest  
 Down dropp'd the Frog, night whelm'd him  
 Seutlaeus<sup>16</sup>, through his heart piercing him  
 Embasichytrus. Polyphonus<sup>17</sup> fell  
 Pierced through his belly by the spear of  
 Artophagus<sup>18</sup>, and prone in dust expired.  
 Incensed at sight of Polyphonus slain,  
 Limnocharis at Troglodytes cast  
 A mill-stone weight of rock ; full on the neck  
 He batter'd him, and darkness veil'd his eyes  
 At him Lichenor hurl'd a glittering lance,  
 Nor err'd, but pierced his liver. Trembling  
 Crambophagus<sup>19</sup> at that dread sight, and p  
 Over the precipice into the lake,  
 Yet even there found refuge none, for brave

<sup>12</sup> The loud-croaker.

<sup>13</sup> One addicted to

A creeper into holes and crannies.

<sup>14</sup> A feeder on the mud.  
 the top of the mud.  
 noisy.

<sup>15</sup> A feeder on be

<sup>16</sup> The bread-eater

<sup>17</sup> The cabbage-eater.

following, smote him even there.  
 Ambophagus, and from that fall 275  
 rose, but reddening with his blood  
 gave, and wallowing in the strings and slime  
 his own vitals, near the bank expired.  
 Anisius<sup>20</sup> on the grassy shore struck down  
 Pteroglyphus<sup>21</sup>; but at the view alone 280  
 terrible Pternoglyphus<sup>22</sup> appall'd,  
 and Calaminthus<sup>23</sup>, cast away his shield  
 far, and headlong plunged into the lake.  
 Androcharis<sup>24</sup> with a vast stone assail'd  
 the King Pternophagus<sup>25</sup>; the rugged mass 285  
 descending on his poll, crush'd it; the brain  
 sized through his nostrils drop by drop, and all  
 the bank around was spatter'd with his blood.  
 Chopinax with his long spear transpierced  
 Chorocoites<sup>26</sup>; darkness veil'd his eyes. 290  
 Anisophagus<sup>27</sup> with vengeful notice mark'd  
 Anisodictes<sup>28</sup>; seizing with one hand  
 his foot, and with the other hand his neck,  
 plunged, and held him plunged, till drown'd he died.  
 Pterocharpax standing boldly in defence 295  
 his slain fellow-warriors, urged his spear  
 right through Pelusius<sup>29</sup>; at his feet he fell,  
 dead, dying, mingled with the Frogs below.

<sup>1</sup> Of the lake.

<sup>21</sup> The cheese-scraper.

<sup>2</sup> The ham-scraper.

<sup>3</sup> So call'd from the herb calaminth.

<sup>4</sup> One whose delight is in water.

<sup>25</sup> The bacon-eater.

<sup>5</sup> The sleeper in the mud.

<sup>27</sup> The garlic-eater.

<sup>6</sup> The savoury-steam-hunter.

<sup>29</sup> The muddy.

Resentful of his death, the mighty Fro  
 Pelobates<sup>30</sup> an handful cast of mud  
 Full at Psycharpax; all his ample front  
 He smear'd, and left him scarce a glim  
 Psycharpax<sup>31</sup> at the foul dishonour, still  
 Exasp<sup>32</sup> the more, upheaving from the  
 A joint that had incumber'd long the b  
 and hurl'd it against Pelobates; below  
 On the knees he smote him, shiver'd his  
 In pieces, and outstretch'd him in the  
 But him Craugasides<sup>31</sup>, who stood to g  
 The fallen Chief, assail'd; with his lon  
 He prick'd Psycharpax at the waist! t  
 Keen-pointed, sh<sup>33</sup> transpierced his be  
 His bowels following the retracted poi  
 O'erspread the ensanguined herbage a  
 Soon as Sitophagus<sup>32</sup>, a crippled mous  
 That sight beheld, limping, as best he  
 He left the field, and, to avoid a fate  
 Not less tremendous, dropp'd into a di  
 Troxartes grazed the instep of the bol  
 Physignathus, who at the sudden pang  
 Startled, at once leap'd down into the  
 Prassens<sup>33</sup>, at the sight of such a Chie  
 Floating in mortal agonies enraged,  
 Sprang through his foremost warriors,  
 His pointed rush, but reach'd not throu  
 Troxartes, baffled by the stubborn dis  
 noisy.  
 ably was a mouse, young, b

<sup>30</sup> The mud-walker.<sup>31</sup> The hoarse-cr<sup>32</sup> The cake-eater.<sup>33</sup> One who deal

on earth, son of the valiant Chief  
 Mars<sup>34</sup>. Like another Mars  
 might, and Meridarpax<sup>35</sup> was his name, 330  
 Mouse, among all Mice without a peer.  
 trying in his might on the lake's verge  
 stood with other Mouse none at his side,  
 and swore to extirpate the whole croaking race  
 nor doubted any but he should perform  
 a dreadful oath, such was his force in arms,  
 and not Saturnian Jove with sudden note  
 received his purpose; with compassion touch'd  
 the devoted Frogs the Sovereign shook  
 his brows, and thus the Deities address'd. 340  
 I see a prodigy, ye Powers divine !—  
 and, with no small amazement smitten, hear  
 hence Meridarpax menacing the Frogs  
 with general extirpation. Haste—be quick—  
 dispatch we Pallas terrible in fight, 345  
 to her alone, but also Mars, to quell  
 with force combined the sanguinary Chief.  
 So spake the Thunderer, and thus Mars replied.  
 Neither the force of Pallas, nor the force  
 of Mars, O Jove ! will save the destined Frogs 350  
 from swift destruction. Let us all descend  
 to aid them, or, lest all suffice not, grasp  
 and send abroad thy biggest bolt, thy bolt  
 impetuous, terror of the Titian race,  
 which those daring enemies thou slew'st,  
 and didst coerce adamantine arms  
 celadus, and all that monstrous brood.

One who lies in wait for bread. <sup>35</sup> The scrap-catcher.





